Greenville College
Library

GREENVILLE COLLEGE
ILLINOIS

Shelf 920 No. T14m

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

https://archive.org/details/talleyrandvividb0000unse

TALLEYRAND

A Vivid Biography of the Amoral, Unscrupulous, and Fascinating French Statesman

BY

LOUIS MADELIN

of the Académie Française

Translated by
Rosalie Feltenstein

ROY PUBLISHERS · NEW YORK

1948

COPYRIGHT 1947, BY ROY PUBLISHERS, A.N., NEW YORK

Published on the same day in the Dominion of Canada
by GEORGE J. McLEOD, LIMITED, TORONTO

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Contents

Preface: My encounters with M. de Talleyrand 5

PART I: DURING THE REVOLUTION

1. Youth 11
2. Towards the Mitre 19
3. The Bishop of Autun as Deputy 27
4. The Chaplain of the Revolution 34
5. Outside of France 39
6. The Approach to Power 48
7. The Ministry under the Directory 57
8. A Timely Disgrace 66

PART II: NAPOLEON'S MINISTER, 1800–1807

9. Bonaparte and Talleyrand 77
10. The Consulate: The Affair of the Concordat 84
11. A Troublesome Marriage 94
12. Foreign Relations under the Consulate 98
13. The Foundation of the "Immense Fortune" 103
14. The Affair of the Duke d'Enghien 108
15. Talleyrand and the War with Austria 114
16. The Prince de Bénévent and Negotiations with England 123
17. Talleyrand in Poland 128
18. An Austrian or a Russian Alliance? 132

PART III: SEMI-RETIREMENT, 1807–1814

19. Departure from the Ministry 141
20. Talleyrand and the Spanish Affair 146
21. The Betrayal at Erfurt 150
22. The Talleyrand-Fouché "Plot" 158
23. January 28, 1809 165
24. Semi-retirement 171
25. The Beginning of the End 177
26. Waiting for the Allies 185
27. Talleyrand's Hour 194

25178

PART IV: THE MINISTER OF THE RESTORATION, 1814–1815

28. The Provisory Government and the Convention of April 23 207
29. The King's Return and the Treaty of Paris 215
30. The Preliminaries of the Congress of Vienna 222
31. Talleyrand at the Congress 231
32. His Difficult Return to the Ministry 247
33. Talleyrand's Ministry 256

PART V: THE LAST MISSION

34. The Aftermath of the Downfall 267
35. Talleyrand Joins the Liberal Opposition 273
36. Talleyrand Prepares a Revolution 279
37. The Embassy to London 283
38. Talleyrand's Last Victory: The Belgian Affair 290
39. The End 300

APPENDIX

Persons, Families, and Historical Events Figuring in the life of Talleyrand 311

Index 315

Preface

MY ENCOUNTERS WITH M. DE TALLEYRAND

IT is more than forty years since I first came across Maurice de Talleyrand in my career as an historian.

When I was studying Fouché in my youth, I soon found that Talleyrand, as Minister of Foreign Relations under the Consulate and the Empire, was his bitter rival. Then, just the other way around, Talleyrand as the Prince de Bénévent was allied with the Duke d'Otrante in secret plots. Next, he drew away from yet constantly approached Fouché, until that astonishing moment when Chateaubriand saw them leaving Louis XVIII's study, Fouché, the former Oratorian and regicide, supporting the painful steps of Talleyrand, the apostate bishop, like "vice leaning on crime." Finally the two men, once again enemies, dragged each other down in their common ruin.

I found this Talleyrand in the first as well as the last chapters of the Revolution, when I was studying it: as a young clerical deputy at meetings of the States-General; then as an outstanding member of the Constitutional Assembly; and, at the other end of the drama, as Minister of the Directory, whose ruin he prepared. When I was later making a study of Danton, I suddenly noticed him again, passing briefly through the life of the revolutionary tribune, who, since he had become a government official, sought inspiration for his still uncertain policies in the diplomatic conceptions of the former Bishop of Autun.

Of course, from one end to the other of my *History of the Consulate and of the Empire,* I found "citizen Talleyrand-Périgord," later known as "His Highness, the Prince de Bénévent," playing the most varied roles everywhere: a contriver of the Brumaire; zealous collaborator of the First Consul; valuable but dangerous servant of the Emperor; secret but active adversary of the sovereign, undermining the imperial throne, to the elevation of which he had once contributed so much.

Finally, I found the old Prince de Talleyrand at the side of the Duke d'Orléans in July 1830, when he was deliberating about accepting the throne, and, when the decision had been made, making himself one of his most useful advisers on foreign policy and obtaining for this "king of the barricades" the "freedom of the city" in Europe.

One rarely meets a personality so unusual and so enigmatic without being tempted to find out more about him. Maurice de Talleyrand was never a simple "supernumerary," and all during my career, my mind has been occupied, almost preoccupied, with this man. So many confusing things have been said about him: scandalous to some and admirable to others, called a tireless schemer by one, proclaimed an eminent statesman by another.

Talleyrand remains—as he once said he wished to—the subject of the liveliest arguments and the most astonishing contradictions. I, too, have tried to discern the personality behind it all, if only for my own satisfaction and guidance. In the long course of my studies of the Revolution and the Empire, I have, like so many historians, received valuable and obliging information from readers about unpublished material, which has helped me a great deal in elucidating certain events. Much of this material had to do with Talleyrand, such as letters written or received by him. Since no one ever interested me more, except Napoleon, I have never let a document concerning him pass without making a note of it, whether I found it in the archives or in a library, and so I have made a Talleyrand file in my files for the Revolution and Empire, and it has illuminated the man for me.

I, too, finally, have tried to write a life of Talleyrand. I have used collections of material, particularly the volumes of George Pallain on *The Mission to London of 1792* and *The Ministry under the Directory, The Unpublished Letters of Talleyrand to Napoleon,* which M. Pierre Bertrand, librarian at the Office of Foreign Affairs, has so carefully collected and published, *Napoleon's Correspondence* and its supplements, to which one must always return, *The Correspondence of Talleyrand and Louis XVIII, The Correspondence of Talleyrand and Jancourt in 1814–1815,* not to mention the great foreign publications, such as *Deutschland und Frankreich* by Bailleu, with which my studies on the Empire made me familiar and in which Talleyrand occupies such an important place. I have also re-read certain memoirs in which this great actor appears: those of Metternich, Mesdames de Rémusat, de Molé, de Pasquier, de Beugnot, the Duchess de Dino, the confidences of the Prince's librarian, Amédée Pichot, the moving account which the Abbé Dupanloup has written of the old man's last days. I have used above all the famous *Memoirs* of Talleyrand himself, which, even though abridged and altered in certain parts, reveal not so much the events, which are knowingly arranged, colored, and often distorted, as the personality which he wanted to leave to posterity.

Talleyrand has had many biographers, almost too many, and I was

able to take advantage of these works as well as of the published documents. I tried to approach the man without any prejudices, and, having often had the occasion to speak of him in passing, I was ready to revise my ideas, if necessary. After long months in his dangerous company, I think that I have not succumbed to the famous fascination which that "devil of a fellow," as the Emperor called him, exercised over all who came near him, including Napoleon, and which he seems still to have for so many historians, even though they are used to being on guard. I hope that in defending myself from this fascination, I have not reacted too strongly against it by blackening the man. In any case, I was not able to deny the fact that he was one of the most remarkable men not only of his own time but also of France's history. He cannot be called one of the greatest, and I shall tell why.

LOUIS MADELIN

Clermont-Ferrand, 15 December, 1942.

PART ONE

DURING THE REVOLUTION

1

YOUTH

IN 1780, the Assembly of the Clergy gathered in Paris for one of its meetings that took place every five years. During these meetings, the delegates of the First Estate discussed their affairs, and, if there was occasion, voted a universal, voluntary contribution to the royal treasury as a free gift. Before disbanding for five years, the Assembly elected two general agents, who were given the extremely important mission of representing the French clergy before the king and His Majesty's government in the courts of intercession.

The order of the day in 1780 called for the reading of a memorandum, taken from the deliberations of 1775, about the immunity which once was always granted to ecclesiastical property but which had been constantly disputed for the past thirty years by the king's ministers when short of money. This memorandum, read at one of the sittings, firmly maintained the inviolability of the financial privileges of the clergy, and of course was favorably received. Its author was a recently ordained twenty-six-year-old priest, a delegate from the diocese of Rheims, who was already attracting the attention of the assembly for a variety of reasons. Despite his lameness and his irregular features, he made a fine appearance, and, moreover, bore an illustrious name: the Abbé Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord. His glance, more penetrating than lively, shadowed by heavy eyelids and thick lashes, revealed a wide-awake intelligence. His snub nose with its flaring nostrils and his mouth with its rather ironic lips gave an impertinent air to his rosy little face, which had a rather dandified air beneath his elaborately curled and heavily powdered hair. There was no timidity in his demeanor—clearly a young lord who would be at ease everywhere.

In 1775, when he was nothing but a little seminarist who had barely reached his majority, his evident ability had attracted the most cautious prelates at the Assembly, and in 1780, he seemed to prove that they were right to have had confidence in him. This little Charles-

Maurice added personal claims for rapid advancement in ecclesiastical duties and honors and perhaps in a public career to the prestige of the name of Talleyrand, one of the most ancient of feudal France. In reality, he was a priest completely lacking in all apostolic virtues. Born in the atmosphere of the court, as a young man he had frequented the frivolous society of his time too much not to suffer for it, and, since the force of circumstances, rather than a true calling, made a priest of him, he did not feel obliged to live like a saint. Such was the spirit of the clergy itself at the end of the century, however, that no one in the Assembly listened to these disturbing rumors. It was as a man of affairs that he was elected one of the two general agents of the clergy, authorized to deal with the ministers of the King in the name of the First Estate. It was even possible that once he became a prelate this shrewd young man might enter the government of the state, as so many high-ranking churchmen had done for the three centuries preceding.

The first chapter is always the most provocative in the lives of the men whom the Revolution brought to the fore. If the life of France had not undergone the violent upheavals of the summer of 1789 and the convulsions which were bound to follow, what would have been the fate of Jacques Danton, the gay law-clerk who became the King's Advocate, a jovial young bourgeois, well thought of by his neighbors, who simply called him "that nice M. d'Anton"; of Joseph Fouché, that skinny "science" professor in the College of the Oratorians of Jesus, whose only ambition was to enrich his physics laboratory; of the needy quack, Marat, who dedicated his "scientific" works to "His Royal Highness, the Count d'Artois"; of the little lawyer from Arras, Maximilian de Robespierre, looking for cases so that he could make a little money; of the serious-minded Lieutenant Lazare Carnot, stationed at the same town of Arras, who left his garrison only for the meetings of the local Academy of "Rosati"; of Joachim Murat, the innkeeper's son from Bastide in Quercy, a minor cavalry officer until he was broken in rank for sowing too many wild oats; of little Lieutenant Bonaparte himself? One can hardly say as much for Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord. As he appears in history, it is difficult to imagine that he would ever have led an obscure life, no matter what happened to him.

Talleyrand's family was ancient and had always been illustrious—daring, too, if it is true that it was descended from that Adelbert, Count de Périgord, who said to Hugh Capet, the chosen one of the great, "Who made you king?" The Talleyrands seem really to have

descended from this insolent nobleman, for the letters-patent of September 6, 1613, which establish two castle-wards as new counties in favor of Daniel de Talleyrand, Prince de Chalais, Count d'Excideuil, Baron de Beauville and de Mareuil, recognize the title to many estates as derived in a direct line from the ancient counts of Périgord.

The Talleyrands for centuries gave their sons to the army rather than to the church. The Talleyrands were soldiers from father to son, up to Daniel-Marc-Anne, colonel of a Norman regiment, killed at the siege of Tournai in 1745, and his son, Charles-Daniel, the father of Charles-Maurice, who was a lieutenant-general when he died in 1788 after a half century of faithful service. Possibly certain influences might have headed the soldier's son towards political life. Through two of his grandmothers, the future statesman was descended from two ministers of Louis XIV, the great Colbert and the mediocre Chamillart. Everything indicates, however, that Charles-Maurice would have been dedicated to a military career, as he himself said, were it not for the accident which at an early date orientated or rather, disorientated, his life.

Childhood

He was the eldest son, and consequently, destined to perpetuate the family name and glory. Of the four sons and one daughter born to Charles-Daniel de Talleyrand and Alexandrine de Dumas d'Antigny, the first died young, very soon after the birth of Charles-Maurice, who thus from his first years was designated the head of the illustrious house.

He was born February 2, 1754, and was barely four years old when there took place the fateful accident which altered his destiny and perhaps, in a certain degree, that of France. His nurse dropped him from a dresser and he threw his foot out of joint. Although Talleyrand said that injury could have been corrected, the lack of immediate care left the foot in a state of irremediable and terrible deformity, twisted like a horseshoe, and the leg was so weak that he had to wear a heavy brace all his life.

In his famous *Memoirs,* the Prince often excused many faults in his life by showing that he was always the victim of his parents' indifference. He made them responsible, if not for the accident itself, then certainly for the negligence with which it was treated. This "indifference" in a household which was a model of domestic virtues in a depraved age would be astonishing, were there not other examples of the coldness, the harshness almost, with which children were treated. It is certain that Charles-Maurice was reared without any tenderness,

almost without any solicitude, which, in his opinion, spoiled him by embittering him. But in those days of rather severe education, many others knew the same kind of childhood and youth and became neither perverted nor rebellious. The great fault of Charles-Maurice's parents was that because of the accident, which it is possible they could not alleviate, they came to a conclusion which seems monstrous today. Because the child could no longer be dedicated to the King's service on account of his injury and therefore was to be given to the service of God, they considered an ecclesiastical career as a last resort, and the Church as an invalid's hideout. But in this point, too, the Talleyrands were in accord with the spirit of the times. For three centuries, it had been the tradition of noble families to keep one of their sons, usually one of the younger ones, for the Church, with the hope and almost the assurance of his becoming a bishop. In the preceding generation, Alexandre-Angélique, the third son of Daniel-Marc, had taken orders, and at the birth of his nephew, he was on his way to becoming archbishop of Rheims. There is no doubt that one of Charles-Maurice's younger brothers, Archambault or Boson, would have become a priest in order to succeed to the uncle, if the famous accident of 1758 had not closed a military career to the elder brother and opened the way to a religious one.

Nothing about the child, however, revealed the slightest vocation. After a visit to his great-grandmother's, the Princess de Chalais, Colbert's grand-daughter, he was shut up, when he was six years old, behind the walls of the college of Harcourt. There he had hardly any success, for which he blamed the lack of encouragement from his family, but he was indolent in his work (he was always lazy and rather proud of it) and he showed no more zeal in the practice of religion, although he had been well instructed at home. His parents hoped that a visit to his Uncle Alexandre, who had become coadjutor of Rheims, might create the atmosphere necessary to produce a "calling." He was sent there when he was fifteen years old, all wrapped up in a cassock, perhaps in the hope that clothes would make the man.

"My son is pleased with his new condition," wrote his poor mother, who was full of illusions. She was sincerely religious and believed that she was doing a pious deed in giving a son to God, though later she bitterly regretted the error into which her blindness had led her.

In reality, he found his "condition" neither good nor bad; he neither loved nor hated the place where, as he was being led towards the priesthood, everyone treated him like the spoiled child of the clergy. Since it was clear that he had not the soul of a St. Vincent de Paul, he

was given biographies to read to convince him that he was not shut off from all other careers because he was entering the Church. He read the lives of the great cardinals who became ministers, from Ximenes to Richelieu, even the ancient life of Hincmar, bishop of Rheims, who had been a great man in both state and church affairs. For his pleasure (because there was sedition in his scepticism), he read the *Memoirs* of Cardinal de Retz, and enjoyed them: after all, one can get anywhere by means of the church sanctuary, so long as one is not confined to it. "After a year's stay at Rheims," he wrote, "seeing that I could not escape my fate, my weary spirit was resigned; I let myself be taken to the seminary of Saint-Sulpice."

One must pause over the beginnings of this unusual life; as in so many cases, one finds in them the explanation of so many actions, and sometimes an excuse for them, as well as the origin of so many happenings. The child is father to the man, and first steps often go irremediably astray, even when they seem to be on the path. The historian of the Revolution, the Empire, and the Restoration constantly comes across Maurice de Talleyrand in such questionable positions that he is obliged to condemn him, as I have often done. Can he do this without considering what could have turned "a nice young fellow" (as Talleyrand called himself) into a phenomenon of immorality? This nice young sixteen-year-old was the son of a loyal, brave soldier and a good, pious woman; his brothers were quiet, respectable people, with nothing perverted about them. Let us admit that through some atavistic tie, the child was born amoral; how, then, did he necessarily become immoral, faithless, and conscienceless, more eager to enjoy than to create, greedy to the point of the most shameless venality, disgracefully unfaithful to the women whose love he exploited, betraying every cause he seemed to serve and all the men who believed in his devotion, and making this systematic treachery the secret of "the immense fortune" for which his desire never slackened? He probably had the remains of a few worthwhile feelings, which his intimates noticed once in a while, and which caused a certain witty woman, preaching to Talleyrand one day, to say, "It seems to me that you are worth more than yourself." Even he, in his extreme old age, once wondered why he had been as he was in the past. He was eighty-four years old, with death awaiting him, when he finally made a straightforward confession to the woman who had enriched the last twenty years of his life.

"During these long spells of insomnia," he told her, "I review many events of my life in my memory. Explain them all to you? No, indeed! There are some I do not understand at all, others that I explain and ex-

cuse, and still others which I criticize all the more severely because it was with such complete frivolity that I did the things which have since been the greatest reproach to me, and if I had acted according to a system on principle, well, then I would understand. But everything was done carelessly, with the heedlessness of those days, as we do everything in our youth."

Here again, while pretending to beat his breast, he sketched an excuse, which he found in the "frivolity" of his times. Certainly, anyone who has studied the latter years of the society in which Charles-Maurice grew up understands all perversions. He was the contemporary of Choderlos de Laclos and of the Marquis de Sade, and yet as a priest and even as a bishop, he gave *Les liaisons dangereuses* and *Le Portier des Chartreux* to his friends. He was one with this epoch, which he called the only age that knew the "pleasure of living." He, however, wanted to know all the refinements or excesses of this "pleasure": money, mistresses, love, gambling, intrigues, all of them polished with an elegance which seemed to redeem them but which was really the worst of corruptions. From this point to that of betraying his class, his friends, his king, his God, all for the sake of a fortune, he still had a way to go. It must be that in this series of treacherous acts he was more or less consciously seeking revenge for a great wrong of which he imagined himself the victim.

"They wanted to make a priest of me," he said to a friend, on the eve of entering the church, "well, you'll see, they'll make me into something really frightful." This is the secret of his life. The child who took the sacrament without faith and with revolt in his heart was made into one of the worst and most dangerous men of the century.

"They forced me to be a priest," he told another confidant, "and they'll repent it."

The Seminary

He entered Saint-Sulpice in 1770. The surroundings were familiar to him, for since their marriage, his parents had lived in a mansion nearby, where Charles-Maurice was born. He had been baptized in the church of Saint-Sulpice and made his first communion there; he had lived in the shadow of its heavy towers and knew well the enormous seminary building. As an excuse for being unfrocked, he pretended later on that he knew nothing but five years of gloom in this somber building. "Five long, sad years of bad humor, silence, and reading." Of these long, sad years he wished to remember only "an extremely unhappy and wrathful young man," "indignant about society," which, "because of a child-

hood infirmity, condemned him not to occupy the position which rightfully belonged to him." In reality, he always had happy memories of his teachers and of some of his fellow pupils and profited greatly from his hours in the library. He was not a prisoner who never lost sight of his chains.

Even if there were chains, he knew how to break them. He often visited the nearby paternal mansion on the Rue Garancière, and he knew a charming little house on the Rue Ferou, even closer by, where a young actress lived, not so well known as most of his friends. Unlike Manon, Dorothy Dorinville, of the Luzy Theatre, did not have to abandon her beloved behind the walls of Saint-Sulpice; Charles-Maurice limped, but he proved that he could make longer journeys than that between Saint-Sulpice and the Rue Ferou. Their secret affair lasted two years, and the young gentleman became a familiar at the little house, where his memory still lives, for though the seventeenth-century seminary has partly disappeared, the charming little dwelling still stands. He did not lose himself in these passing love affairs: he passed his first examinations and he left the seminary when he was twenty to finish his ecclesiastical studies at the theological faculty of the Sorbonne.

The new king, Louis XVI, had a special affection for Lieutenant-General Daniel de Talleyrand; the latter had been loyal to his father, and the Dauphin, who had died prematurely, and had been one of the group who backed him against the old king, Louis XV. As soon as Count Daniel asked him, Louis XVI gave the young abbé a good benefice without even waiting until he had taken his major orders. At 21, Charles-Maurice had charge of the abbey of Saint-Denis at Rheims, and an income of 18,000 livres a year. This event also gave him a foothold in the diocese which the coadjutor Alexander de Talleyrand-Périgord governed under the old Cardinal de la Roche Aymon. Because of this fortunate circumstance, Charles-Maurice could be sent from this diocese to the Assembly of the Clergy, where he attracted so much attention. From this time on, the little abbé's fortune seemed to be made. But to become a bishop he must at least have taken the major orders. Therefore he resumed his studies at the Sorbonne.

If he felt in himself the makings of a statesman, he was too prudent to boast of it, and though he may have planned to govern the state, for the time being, at least, he was content to govern a diocese. He suddenly decided to enter the priesthood. He became a subdeacon on August 12, 1775, deacon on September 17, 1779, and three months later, on December 18, he was ordained as a priest. On the eve of the ceremony, his friend, Choiseul de Gouffier, found him prey, not to a fit of conscience,

but to a sort of rage at the idea that perhaps he was going to shut away his life forever and, without having desired it for an instant, to condemn himself to seeking pleasure only through fraud. When Choiseul in alarm urged him to put it off, he answered, "It's too late. There's no more turning back." The new priest celebrated his first mass on December 19, in a frame of mind that it is distasteful even to imagine.

2

TOWARDS THE MITRE

The "pleasures of living"

LONG BEFORE he was ordained, Charles-Maurice was familiar with these "pleasures of living," the vanished charms of which he would one day celebrate with retrospective voluptuousness. He knew all their aspects and all their nuances. He became the friend of a group of young gentlemen, all of whom, in different spheres, displayed unusual wit and who, even in that delicately elegant age, achieved the most rarefied politeness, characteristic of a dying society. In his little bachelor's rooms on the Rue de Bellechasse, the Abbé de Périgord received Choiseul de Gouffier, the future diplomat and scholar; Lauzun, already an ornament of the court of Versailles and a future general of the Republic; Narbonne, one of the wittiest men of his time, who was to be Louis XVI's minister and Napoleon's aide-de-camp; and a dozen more of the same tastes and habits.

It is highly probable that the young man was on this same footing of pure friendship, colored somewhat by gallantry, with most of the women who have been considered his mistresses. The most outstanding of these "dear friends," the fifty-year-old Louise de Rohan, Countess de Brionne, whose husband was of the house of Lorraine, could have been the mother of the little abbé. Her keen liking for him was translated into that passion to protect, guide, and push him ahead, characteristic of so many women of the world. She was so mad about her abbé that when he was barely ordained and hardly dreaming of the bishopric, she already wanted to see him a cardinal and had all her most influential friends send recommendations of him to Rome. She even had King Gustav of Sweden, although he was a Lutheran, solicit Pius VI for a red hat for this twenty-seven-year-old priest whom the ladies loved so well. Louise de Rohan did not succeed, and was glad of it when she saw her young protégé breaking with the Church as well as with the throne. So great did her bitterness against him grow that later, when he had become one of the most prominent persons in Europe, no overtures

on his part could soften her. At least he respected the Countess de Brionne, even while exploiting her, but he was less discreet with her daughter, Charlotte de Lorraine, abbess of Remiremont, who had a weakness for the "little abbé," and with her daughter-in-law, the Princess de Vaudemont, who seems, however, to have known how to maintain a "friendly alliance" in just the manner she wished for over fifty years. As much may be said for the Countess de Montesson, who specialized in worldly prelates and who remained the useful friend of the Abbé de Périgord for many years. There are at least ten women of this class: the Countess de Boufflers, Suzanne de Jarente, Mme. d'Héricourt, the Duchesses of Fitz-James and of Luynes, and the Viscountess de Laval, whose relations with the abbé caused the most contradictory rumors, since in those days love was so much a matter of the wit, and friendship between the sexes was so free. It is difficult to see clearly in these matters, but no one can ignore the sharply defined nature of the relations which were established in 1782 between Adelaide Filleul, Countess de Flahaut, and the charming abbé. This was the first outrageous scandal in a long life that was full of them.

Outrageous it was, if only because of the young woman's personality. Her mother, wife of a farmer-general, taken to the notorious *"parc aux cerfs,"* perhaps by the Marquise de Pompadour, had a daughter by Louis XV, who was later married to the brother of the prime favorite, the Marquis de Marigny. Adelaide was married at eighteen to this Count de Flahaut de Billarderie, who was fifty-four, but she let everyone know that she was saving herself for someone younger, who turned out to be the Abbé de Périgord.

When a son was born to the Countess de Flahaut on April 21, 1785, and he was named Charles, everyone recognized the work of Charles-Maurice. The Flahaut family was enraged, and the United States ambassador, Gouverneur Morris, made several jokes about it in his letters. The American had evidently not been instructed in the nature of a relationship which the Countess, her eyes heavenwards, used to call "a marriage of the heart," for one day on a visit he found the abbé obligingly warming the bed which the lady was about to enter. "It is rather strange," the Puritan remarked, "to see a reverend father of the Church engaged in this pious operation."

Neither Madame de Flahaut, who later became the Countess de Souza, nor Talleyrand himself ever thought of refuting the unanimous public opinion that Charles de Flahaut was his son. Even though he never formally recognized him, Talleyrand had no wish to deny this brilliant Charles, who became Napoleon's aide-de-camp, a general at

thirty-four, later an ambassador, a distinguished soldier, and a polished man of the world. Twenty-five years later, the romantic attachment of the young General de Flahaut and Queen Hortense resulted in the birth of a child, Auguste, known as "little Morny," who was endowed with many unusual gifts. The old Prince de Talleyrand often had this child brought to him, and would question him with benevolent curiosity.

The agent-general of the clergy

One must not think that the Abbé de Périgord spent all his time warming up ladies' beds. No matter how many his gallant affairs, he gave them only the leisure hours of a life that was otherwise occupied. In 1780, the Assembly of the Clergy had chosen him as one of two agents-general, and he took this position very seriously, associating himself with four churchmen, three of whom, Mannay, Bourlier, and Duvoisin, became bishops under the Concordat. The fourth, Des Renaudes, had a completely different fate. He became Talleyrand's right-hand man, followed him in his defection in 1791, and remained his intimate co-worker, his *"âme damnée,"* as it were, a clever, hard-working schemer of whom the great man always made use. From 1780 on, he played this role for the Abbé de Périgord, but the latter was not the man to turn over an accepted mission to underlings. As agent-general, this little priest, who was not even thirty years old, used to see the ministers, and assumed the authority to handle all matters which might cause friction between the First Estate and the government. The chief ministers of Louis XVI, old Maurepas, as well as the serious-minded Turgot, were astounded by the way in which this former seminarist went to the heart of disputed questions. The most important problem concerned ecclesiastical properties. The government faced a deficit which had been growing worse for ten years, until the King had to make an appeal to the nation in 1789. To avoid this extreme measure, certain ministers were reviving the idea which Louis XIV himself had never abandoned, that the King could refresh the treasury by means of part or all of the Church properties, since these were at his disposal along with everything else. The clergy, on the other hand, considered these properties as "the irrevocable, inalienable patrimony of the Church." The Abbé de Périgord had decided not to yield one inch, and since he was so inflexible on this question, the ministers of Louis XVI surely would have fallen over backwards, could they suddenly have looked into the future and seen this same Talleyrand, then a bishop and deputy to the States-General, coming himself to hand over to the nation all of these very properties

of which he courteously but firmly denied the Versailles government the least scrap.

Too clever to remain on the defensive, the young man began thinking about the more general question of the threatened bankruptcy of the public finances. Talleyrand always had an unusual flair for financial problems. He had studied such matters long before the deficit resulted in the crisis of 1789, and once in the Constitutional Assembly, he displayed himself as such an expert that for a long time he was thought of as a "treasurer," rather than as a politician, more fitted to manage the business of the exchequer than diplomatic affairs.

He had a competent knowledge of all the problems which faced an agent-general of the clergy. Several years later, people were astonished to see this "financier" produce a complete plan for national education before the Constitutional Assembly. This was the result of the fact that before 1789 public education was the exclusive domain of the Church, and the agent-general had given some thought to reform of the schools, and conducted an inquiry of which he gave an account to the Church Assembly of 1785.

When this body met again, there was only praise for the intelligence and good fortune with which the Abbé de Périgord had served the Church since 1780. He was elected one of the two secretaries of the Assembly, a most important role. At the end of the session, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Champion de Cicé, delivered a *Report of the Agents on the Chief Events of 1780–1785,* and concluded that "this monument of talent and zeal assures the undying gratitude of the Assembly to the clever hands which erected it." No one was astonished when the president of the Assembly, Dillon, the Archbishop of Narbonne, "earnestly recommended to His Majesty's graciousness" the candidacy of the agent-general to a vacant episcopal seat.

The Abbé de Périgord looked forward to the bishopric with some assurance, and, even though he had hardly passed thirty, not without impatience. The bishopric, of course, was not his ultimate goal, merely a stop on the way, and he wanted to be a prelate only to be able to elevate himself still further, not so much in an ecclesiastical career as in worldly affairs. In the face of the coming crisis, he groped his way, for it is a curious thing, as Danton said, that with all his perspicacity he did not see the oncoming "avalanche." Doubtless he knew those who worked to let loose the avalanche, for he belonged to all the great masonic lodges, from the Philaletheans, whence sprang the Jacobin Club, to the Reunited Friends, where the great ringleaders of the future were already preparing the Revolution. Lauzun must have taken him to the Palais

Royal, where the Duke de Chartres, then d'Orléans, the future Philippe Egalité, was holding court for the revolutionary opposition. Still, he could believe nothing but that the Throne would never be destroyed or even humiliated, and much later, he persisted in the idea that the Revolution could be suppressed. Hence the intermittent character of his pre-revolutionary friendships.

He was most intimate with Count Honoré Gabriel de Mirabeau, though it is impossible to conceive of two more completely opposite temperaments. How could that terrible Mirabeau, with his fiery nature, his hot blood, his mighty outbursts and revolts, that "mad dog" whose bite everyone feared, have let himself be charmed into saying "my dear, my very dear master," to that little Périgord, so cold-hearted, firm, and calculating, so full of crafty schemes? But charmed Mirabeau was, and this bull from Camargue, fascinated, was at the beck and call of the sharp-eyed little Talleyrand. But one day the tribune saw things clearly, and in a moment of sudden illumination, of the kind he often had, he suddenly realized that Talleyrand was one of those who exploit friendship as they do love for the sake of greed and ambition.

After who knows what base treachery, Mirabeau bellowed, "He has sold his honor and his friend for money. He'd sell his soul for money, and he'd be right, for he'd be trading trash for gold." At that moment, however, everyone had illusions about the little abbé. Yet he was going to betray them all. How did Mirabeau see into the future? His words are just like those uttered by Napoleon after twenty years of experience.

"Trash," is what the tribune said, but "s—t in a silk stocking," is what the Emperor exclaimed. After such outbursts, how did Mirabeau ever again draw near this "vile plotter"? The answer is that it was just as necessary to have men of unshakeable calm to organize the Revolution, as it was to have men of fire to arouse the mob. Mirabeau was to die in the flames which he had lit; Talleyrand took care to avoid the fire and escaped to become the privileged minister of the Empire.

A visit to the Duke de Choiseul

The Duke de Choiseul, whose fame had once filled Europe, had lived for fourteen years in proud exile, confined to Chanteloup. When he was prime minister in 1770, he had fallen victim to the plots of the Du Barry circle, but such was his prestige that his exile was accompanied by popular regret, and for fourteen years, whatever errors were made in France or in Europe seemed to increase his glory, for it was always said that he would have known how to avert them. Choiseul's prestige was still great. His chief merit was that he had abandoned the policy

which put France in time-honored opposition to Austria. There was some reason for this policy when Austria was seeking hegemony, but after the end of the seventeenth century, it was useful only to France's two real enemies, England and Prussia. In agreement with Louis XV, he had "upset the alliances," and, to keep France from "working for Prussia," had united Louis XV and Maria-Theresa against Frederick II. Choiseul had, moreover, sought a revenge for French defeats in the Seven Years' War, and, by means of a "family pact," had joined the Bourbon princes of France, Spain, and Italy in order to ruin the more and more dazzling grandeur of England. A base plot had destroyed the minister just as he was preparing a great future, and France lost by it, for she had had to allow the breaking up of Poland. The old King then said, "If only Choiseul were still here . . ." The Duke, however, though his return to public life was constantly being announced, continued to live in haughty withdrawal, and like all those who have known great glories and great disgraces, he would freely offer his visitors criticisms, prophecies, forebodings, and, sometimes, oracular utterances. But knowing Europe better than he did France, he did not foresee the great upheaval that was coming, and he spoke of the future as if it were going to unfold in the traditional manner.

The Abbé de Périgord managed to have himself introduced at Chanteloup through his intimate friend, Choiseul-Gouffier, who was the statesman's nephew. There, among others, he found Blanc d'Hauterive, the Oratorian professor, who was one day to play an important role in his life. The latter has left us a report of a conversation between the fallen minister and the minister-to-be. While the Abbé de Périgord walked silently at his side through the park, Choiseul talked in fits and starts, but with the complacency with which one recalls his past.

"Since my departure," he said, "there have been terrible things going on in Poland . . . This violation will lead to others, and who will be in the Ministry then? It surely won't be a churchman, as it was before me. We need a minister who has nothing in common with the Church. France has had five cardinals as ministers: Richelieu, Mazarin, Dubois, Fleury, and Bernis. Those days are gone forever, but (and I'm not thinking of myself) I have always thought that the minister should be a courtier . . . During my ministry, I always had more work done for me than I did myself. You mustn't bury yourself beneath papers; you must find people to clear them away. You have to control things by a gesture, a sign . . . You must make the workers work, so that the day has more than twenty-four hours. A minister who goes into society, when warned of a danger, can divine it even at a party. What would he

learn if he were always shut up in his office? And you, my dear abbé, if you can't be a prime minister, you can be an ambassador. There's some advice for you . . ."

The abbé listened in silence, feeling baffled, frustrated, yet captivated, and when he left the Duke, he was at the same time impressed and vexed. According to the former minister, even a future bishop and cardinal had to give up all hope. Only a layman could play Richelieu, and to tell the truth, this layman had to be exactly like the Duke de Choiseul. Such silliness! Just the same, perhaps the disgraced minister was right. For half a century the Church, faced with the increasing progress of "philosophy," had been steadily losing prestige in France. Would the new France let a priest rule her? The cassock, even if it were of violet or crimson, might turn out to be a robe of Nessus for an ambitious man, and if it could not be torn off, it might be necessary to renounce the hope of playing a great role. But the future Prince de Talleyrand had envisaged this role more clearly than ever while listening to the Duke de Choiseul. Europe had to be repaired; the "terrible happenings" in Poland had shaken her. The foundation of the British empire, after conquests by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, had relegated France to the status of a second-rate power. A statesman was needed who could profit by re-establishing European equilibrium by means of a solid alliance: perhaps with Austria, since Choiseul could see no other to play off against Prussia as well as Russia. The idea was like a seed planted in young Talleyrand's mind. He remained in a state of both exaltation and anger: exalted by the sight of this little old duke, whose head, like that of an aged baby, still dandified and rosy beneath his powdered hair, revealed a certain frivolity, but who just the same had been a power for fifteen years at Rome, Vienna, and Paris; enraged at the idea that this old man could so lightly brush aside his hopes. But these were to be reborn after the Revolution, when all shackles, including those of the priesthood, had been broken. Even though he left Chanteloup in irritation, Talleyrand took away with him a powerful desire to give the lie to the saying, "If you cannot be prime minister . . ." Why not?

The mitre

While waiting, he still had to push himself ahead, and advance himself in the cursed career in which he was engaged. The Assembly had placed Périgord's episcopal candidacy before Louis XVI, and from this moment they were working on Pious VI to give him a "hat." From 1785 to 1788, the abbé's name was mentioned each time there was an

episcopal vacancy. Louis XVI hesitated; he had heard of the dissolute life of this young man, who was considered, moreover, a priest with no piety, almost with no religion. As a pious man, Louis hated to name bishops in whom, as he said, "the Holy Ghost would be only a mere ghost." He had no confidence in the faith or the virtue of the Abbé de Périgord. What was he to think when Charles-Maurice's mother, already scandalized by her son's misconduct and filled with remorse for having forced him into the priesthood, herself begged him not to give her son the mitre, since it would only make his behavior more shocking and blameworthy. Daniel de Talleyrand, on the other hand, thought that, lacking God's grace, the grace of the bishopric would have some effect on the young man, and it was perhaps he who suggested Louis XVI's answer to the Countess, "All that will be corrected." Count Daniel was ill and soon to die, and as a last favor, he asked the King to give the young man a diocese. Louis XVI yielded, and on November 2, 1788, Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord became the successor of Marboeuf, Bishop of Autun, who had been transferred to the archepiscopal seat of Lyon. "Being well informed of the good life, habits, piety, learning, great ability, and other virtuous and commendable qualities which are found in the person of . . ." The conventional formula of nomination was sadly ironic in this case. On the following day, Daniel de Talleyrand died, rejoicing in the event which was to have such grievous results.

3

THE BISHOP OF AUTUN AS DEPUTY

Election to the States-General

"OUR VERY dear brethren, ever since the day when His Majesty's choice called us to live among you, at every moment we have been able to say to you what Saint Paul wrote to the Romans: 'God is my witness that I never cease thinking of you.' *Testis est mihi Deus quod sine intermissione memoriam vestri facio.* Yes, permit this expression, our very dear brethren, for you have become our tender and only care."

This was the first pastoral letter, dated January 26, 1789, which the new bishop addressed to his flock. *"Desidero videre vos,"* Saint Paul had written. Charles-Maurice appropriated his words: "I aspire to see you."

He did not appear, however. He was consecrated as bishop on January 16, 1789, by the Bishop of Noyon, in the chapel of Issy, after a retreat during which the superior of Saint-Sulpice looked in vain for any signs of grace. The young prelate then resumed the worldly Parisian life of the Abbé de Périgord. The great city held so many charms and so many promises for the Bishop of Autun that he was not able to give it up easily. Contrary to what he had told the members of his new diocese, he was in no hurry to occupy the seat which the "blessed Syagrius" and the "Saints Amator and Reverianus" had made illustrious by their virtues many centuries before. He dallied in Paris over occupations which were hardly those that made Syagrius blessed. For the time being, he had hardly any thought of going to Burgundy, for Paris seemed more alluring to him than ever, now that he could live more luxuriously. Richelieu had formerly described his Luçon as "the most wretched diocese"; compared to others, Autun was well off, bringing its possessor an income of 22,000 livres. But, to enable this highborn bishop to do honor to his position, King Louis, unwearying in his kindnesses, had also given him the abbey of Celle in Poitou, which, along with the abbey of Saint-Denis at Rheims, gave the net income of 52,000 livres. This sum enabled the new bishop to gamble for higher stakes, thus satisfying one of his lifelong passions. Seeing him run from gam-

ing table to boudoir, people used to say smilingly that it would be a good idea not to rely too much on this new apostle to the Gauls. How long would he wait to have himself installed?

But suddenly he set out on his journey. *"Desidero videre vos."* Mgr. de Talleyrand-Périgord's coach burned up the king's highway in the beginning of March, 1789. Who dared to say he was not looking after his diocese? He was rushing there. Let us admit that he wanted his priests to elect him deputy to the States-General.

On the first of January, 1789, Louis XVI had convoked his subjects by deputation. Thus began the great upheaval that was to overturn everything. Although he had not yet a clear idea of the role he would have, Talleyrand intended to take part in the great drama. But how daring of this young prelate, appointed barely four months before, having never even set foot in his diocese, to hope to be elected deputy by his unknown clergy! What attitude should he take towards the political and social problems of the day? As an aristocrat, hating all popular government, as a conservative, Charles-Maurice had no personal interest in reforming the church, whose benefits and even whose abuses he was enjoying once more. In March, 1789, he was asking himself only one question: is the royal government strong enough to control the monster which it has rashly let loose? If the answer should be yes, the prelate was ready to help; if no, he had to avoid being swept away with the old order. He had to ride the crest of the wave to a new destiny.

He quickly realized that the strength of this wave was greater than he had first thought. In the diocese of Autun, as in sixty others, the lower clergy were all for the "new ideas." "These bastardly curates will ruin us," cried the Count d'Autraigues, and the fact is that a few months later it was only the adherence of these "bastardly curates" to the "union of classes" that enabled the Third Estate to bring about the King's downfall. So great was the alienation of the lower clergy, that in the spring of 1789 there were some dioceses where bishops were heckled and almost insulted at the electoral assemblies, and many of these vote-seeking prelates lost the elections. Apparently the clergy of Autun were not so aroused, but certainly the majority, for a while at least, supported the ideas of national representation and of equal rights. The proof lies in the discourse which the young prelate addressed to them, after carefully informing himself of the state of their feelings, and which filled them with such enthusiasm that they copied it all out in their "notebooks." Talleyrand knew which way the wind was blowing, and his statement was very clear: the States-General could not be dissolved

until it had established a government of national representation, guarantee of rights for all; no public act could become a general law until the representatives of the nation consented; and no tax would be valid unless voted by the Assembly. Thus in one bound, the son of great feudal lords went over to the side of a representative government, and satisfied the manifest wishes of his electors.

The young bishop had won out. On April 2, he was elected with a very large majority by these clergymen to whom he had been unknown a month before. Despite the approach of Easter which should most specially have detained the bishop in his city, he had his trunks packed up, his coach made ready, and on Easter eve itself, he left for Paris. He had been at Autun for only a month, and was not to appear there again. But he left well satisfied with his incredible success, which placed him on the first step of the ladder he intended to scale so quickly.

At the States-General

The States-General met at Versailles on May 5, and immediately faced the great question: would they vote by estate or by head, or, in other words, would they be constituted a single Assembly? The first two classes refused. After six weeks of negotiation, the nobility still held out, but the majority of the clergy finally decided on June 22 to join the Third Estate. The next day, however, in a "royal sitting," the three orders heard the sovereign express his wish that each would meet in its own chamber. The Third Estate refused to comply with the King's order. Then the discouraged King ordered the nobility and the clergy to join with the Third Estate. This first capitulation was soon followed by a more serious one. After the capture of the Bastille by the rebellious people, and the slaughter which followed, Louis XVI came to the city hall to greet those who had assailed his fortress and murdered his officers. From that day on, the Revolution took the path of violence, and the King, that of abdication.

In the midst of these events, Talleyrand was reserved, if not hesitant. He had had nothing to do with the advance guard of the Chamber of the Clergy, led by five bishops, which decided to rejoin the Third Estate on June 19. When the Third Estate met in the Tennis Hall on June 20 and took its famous oath to resist any attempt at its dissolution, Talleyrand would even have advised the King to send out troops against them. With the help of the bayonets that Mirabeau defied, the Estates had to be dissolved and another assembly convoked, elected according to different rules.

The Fourteenth of July exasperated him. On the night of the sixteenth, he rushed to Marly to beg the Count d'Artois to urge his brother, the King, to offer armed resistance to the outrages which were clearly multiplying. The young prince undertook the mission, but returned discouraged. The King was going to Paris the next day to sign his capitulation, and the Count d'Artois himself had resolved to leave France the next day—another form of abdication. At exactly this moment, Talleyrand saw in a flash the destruction of a world.

"Then, my lord," he cried, "all that is left is for each one of us to look after his own interests, since the King and the princes are abandoning theirs and those of the monarchy."

"Indeed, that's what I advise you to do," the King's brother replied rather frivolously. "No matter what happens, I shan't blame you, and you can always count on my friendship." The two young men parted with these words; they were to meet again twenty-five years later, Talleyrand as head of the French government laying his powers in the hands of the Count d'Artois, lieutenant-general of the kingdom on April 12, 1814.

For the time being, Talleyrand's mind was made up. "I resolve," he cried, "not to leave France until personal danger forces me to it, to do nothing to provoke it, not to fight against a torrent which must be allowed to pass, but to hold myself ready to save what can be saved, to rear no obstacle between the opportunity and myself, and to save myself for it."

. . . . .

It was easy for Talleyrand to go over to the revolutionary side; his affiliations with the most influential masonic lodges before 1789 accredited him. Through them he was personally acquainted with the leaders, Lafayette, Siéyès, Condorcet, a dozen others, and especially Mirabeau. The Bishop of Autun (he was never called otherwise) was naturally of the revolutionary majority, bringing to it his crafty talents, so that later one of his admirers wrote: "Uniquely occupied with the appeasement of violence, he tried to proceed as gently as possible." Many of his colleagues of the Left praised him in this fashion; this bishop, this great lord, justified the most violent outrages by representing them as necessary expedients. Soon he was to have the chance to show himself in circumstances that were decisive for himself as well as for the Revolution. "It was the Bishop of Autun," said Malouet, "who already had the greatest influence on the operations of the Assembly." At first, he seemed to wish to exert this influence only in the matter of public finances.

The national properties

The States-General had been convoked only because the Monarchy, threatened with bankruptcy, wished to ask for new national resources. But from spring to fall of 1789, the condition of the treasury, rather than improving, constantly grew worse. The convulsed country had hardly stopped paying the established taxes. What good would it be to superimpose others? Attempts at borrowing had been made, but one does not lend to a sick man, and such France seemed to be. Appeals had been made for "patriotic gifts," and though these seemed generous, they equaled only seven of the one hundred millions that were needed. Necker, who was still Minister of Finance, was struggling with these difficulties, but finally he admitted that he was at his wit's end. Suddenly he lost his great popularity, and several candidates already had designs upon his position. Mirabeau denounced this "hideous bankruptcy" only to declare his candidacy. Talleyrand was working towards the same end less openly. If single-handed he could suddenly find a solution for the financial problem, he would succeed Necker. What the Genevan Protestant, held back by his Protestantism, did not dare to suggest, he, Catholic, priest, bishop, was going to propose: the "retaking" of the ecclesiastical fortune by the nation. This fortune was considerable, being close to three thousand millions, and had tempted all needy statesmen for centuries. Obliging theoreticians were always ready to banish their scruples. Established by the wishes of donors and testators, this fortune, they said, was only a *deposit* in the hands of the Church. "The Church is the collection of the faithful," said one orator, "and these are not priests only." Now who are the faithful, if not the whole nation? The sophistry is skillful. In reality, money was needed; in face of the protest aroused by the proposal, a deputy wrote in his journal, "What do they want to pay debts with?" Such a measure was also most agreeable to the "philosophers" of the Assembly, who were not at all displeased to see the clergy despoiled. Nevertheless, no one dared to bring forth a proposition that might set the clergy against the Revolution, which the majority had not only acclaimed but even served. But if one of the most eminent representatives of the clergy itself were to toss this tidbit to the Assembly, with what acclaim would he be received!

The Bishop of Autun mounted to the rostrum at the beginning of the sitting of October 10, 1789. He read a short motion whose consequences were to be incalculable. After recalling the fact that the long search for the resources needed to re-establish finances had been in vain, he declared: "There is one immense and decisive resource, which in my

opinion (for otherwise I should reject it) may be combined with the strictest respect for propriety. This resource seems to me to be found entirely in the ecclesiastical properties . . . The clergy is not a proprietor like other proprietors, because the property which it enjoys (and of which it cannot dispose) was given not for the interest of persons but for the serving of certain functions . . . If the Nation completely assures this honest subsistence to each incumbent, then she will not be infringing upon his ownership; and if at the same time she takes over, as she undoubtedly has the right to do, the administration of the rest, if she assumes responsibility for the other obligations attached to these properties, such as the maintenance of hospitals, poorhouses, repairs to churches, expenses of public education, etc. . . . , especially if she dips into these possessions only at a moment of general calamity, it seems to me that all the intentions of the founders will be fulfilled and that justice will be strictly done." In the stupefied silence of the enthusiastic and indignant alike, the Bishop read the projected law, according to which "the incomes and the landed property of the clergy were given to the nation," provided that the latter "assured the clergy of one hundred millions in revenues."

Acclamations and protestations were understandable. If, despite the soothing sophisms of the speech, this "taking back" by the nation could be considered as the most serious blow in centuries to the principle of property, it was not, however, the chief cause of emotion in the Assembly. What was even more serious than the act of spoliation itself was the inference drawn from it by the author of the motion: the sudden transfer of the control of charity and education from the Church to the laity and the state, thus accomplishing a veritable revolution in the role assigned for centuries to the clergy, both regular and secular, and suddenly abolishing what were considered as equally important rights and duties. If a deputy, even one of advanced opinions, had offered such a proposition, astonishment would have been great, but that the author of the motion should be a priest, a descendant of the high nobility, a bishop chosen by his class, and, moreover, the same Talleyrand who nine years before had protected the ecclesiastical property against the King's ministers with such tenacity, all this was something that the deputies could not recover from for several days, whether they were favorable to the measure or not. This law of November 2, 1789, was far from re-establishing the treasury on account of the enormous loss of value caused by the too sudden sale of the confiscated properties, and it also turned against the Revolution not only the doubly despoiled majority of the clergy, but also a large part of the nation. The result of

the ensuing opposition to the movement was to be a bitter conflict between the Church and the new state, and from this conflict arose the civil constitution of the clergy, the most fatal measure taken by the Assembly, and all the calamities which followed. It is a mystery how Talleyrand could have taken a step so full of danger. He was too calculating not to have realized the import of his motion, and too circumspect not to have foreseen at least some of the consequences. If he had deliberately struck this mighty blow against his "class," it was undoubtedly because his ambition was suited by a rupture between Church and State, which could later be followed by his own rupture with the Church, for he aspired ardently to his "liberation," now that his cassock was no longer any use in making his fortune.

He was careful, however, not to let his enemies rush him too quickly into this rupture, which he intended to accomplish cautiously and gradually. He remained a bishop. On October 12, after Talleyrand had exploded his bomb in the Assembly, the enlightened curates of Autun received a pastoral letter in which he ordered the faithful to say the "prayers of forty hours" to "obtain the end of the troubles of the realm." "Your wrath, O Lord," he exclaimed, "is aroused against the sheep of your flock. Will your hand cast us away? Ah, Lord, remember a nation which has been dedicated to you since its origin. Do not lose sight of the covenant which you have made with her. Arise to defend her cause, for it is yours." The letter was signed: "Ch.-Maurice, Bishop of Autun."

He was completely deceived, however. Distrusting those who led them, especially Mirabeau and Talleyrand, the Assembly struck a terrible blow against these two men and probably against several others. By the famous vote of November 12, they decided that the King could never choose his ministers among the national deputies. Mirabeau rose violently against his "stupid enemies," who by this vote organized the misunderstanding between the powers to some extent. Talleyrand did not conceal his bitterness from his friends, but said nothing to the Assembly. He did well, for Mirabeau was not to reach the presidential seat until much later, but Talleyrand was swept into it by a majority of the Left on February 16, 1790.

Disavowed now by his own group, rejected, reproved, and despairing of becoming a king's minister immediately, he busied himself more and more with a new plan by which he hoped to gain a completely different and even greater fortune.

4

THE CHAPLAIN OF THE REVOLUTION

The Federation Mass

ALTHOUGH he was now a declared "patriot," Talleyrand, who all his life had a horror of excessive actions, was content with playing his role as a deputy. He was on all the important committees of the Assembly, such as the committee on finances, which was trying in vain to enforce the November 2 law for the restoration of the treasury by organizing the sale of ecclesiastical properties; the committee on the constitution, which was formulating that strangely unbalanced document that was to be the constitution of 1791; and the committee on public education, to which he presented his celebrated plan for national instruction in September, 1790. By concentrating on being simply a deputy, entirely devoted to the needs of the Revolution, Talleyrand was transforming himself very gradually into a layman, for probably he had no idea of becoming the "chief chaplain of the Revolution." But in its desire to add religious pomp (or rather a travesty of it) to the actions of the new regime, the Assembly imposed this role upon the "bishop" just at the moment when he was tossing away his violet robes and his priestly credentials. It is hardly believable that he could really have desired or gladly agreed to celebrate on the Field of Mars that notorious mass of the Federation, a burlesque which must have seemed in the most detestable taste to him more than to anyone else.

The great celebration of the Federation took place on July 14, 1790. To commemorate the first anniversary of the taking of the Bastille in a suitable fashion, there had been talk of an enormous, unprecedented display in honor of Liberty and National Fraternity. At the center of the Field of Mars on whose grassy banks were seated three hundred thousand spectators, an altar had been built, where the officiating priest would say mass and bless the flags of the national guards of the eighty-three departments, represented by deputations and introduced by Lafayette. A procession started from the Military School, composed of a

group of priests, who wore tricolored scarves over their white albs. Behind them gleamed a single golden mitre; the Bishop of Autun seemed to be limping more than ever. Thus Talleyrand, perhaps sick at heart, consented to give this new guarantee of his "patriotic" zeal.

He tried to forget the mass said at the Field of Mars, and as soon as it was over and he had taken off his ornaments, he went to a gambling house, and had such luck that in a few hours he broke the bank. With his pockets bursting with money, he gaily went to dine at the house of one of his favorites, the Viscountess de Laval, left for another gaming house, and returned a little later to show the noble lady his hat stuffed with bank notes.

Although the mass said at the Field of Mars was taken so lightly, the mass of February 24, 1791, by which Talleyrand alone established the so-called constitutional church, had a much more serious effect on his career.

The consecration of the constitutional clergy

The Civil Constitution was not Talleyrand's work; his task was its practical realization, which he achieved by giving life to the schismatic church. This measure, which Talleyrand later called one of the most deadly enacted by the Assembly, was the result of the nationalization of church properties and the events which followed. The vote of November 2, 1789 had aroused part of the episcopate against the Revolution, but the hostility of certain bishops provoked the Assembly to enact the law of July 12, 1790, which reorganized and nationalized the Church itself. With a stroke of the pen, bishoprics were done away with, dioceses were cut up to fit into the framework of departments, parishes were given new boundaries, curates and bishops were to be chosen by popular election, and to be appointed not by Rome but by the archbishop. All this was done with no thought of consulting the Holy See. No one doubted that the Pope would condemn the law, so that the clergy considered the new organization as null and void. In an effort to push the situation to the extreme, the leaders then insisted upon a second law, obliging churchmen of every rank either to take an oath of allegiance to the Civil Constitution or to resign. It was passed on November 27, 1790, and since most of the bishops refused to take the oath, the electors were called to choose new pastors. This entirely artificial schism was now complete.

Naturally, Talleyrand came to "swear," since the oath was obligatory. At the beginning of the session of December 28, 1790, when very few deputies were present, he furtively went up to the rostrum and took

the oath in a low voice, as if he were going through some unimportant formality. As a matter of fact, everything was turning out well for him; since he was determined to free himself from the church, he saw this occasion as a kind of transition which favored his plan.

During the second week of January, the electors of the Paris department (the Seine) met to choose administrators, and they selected Talleyrand among others. He accepted immediately, and, declaring his wish to devote himself entirely to his new duties, he sent the King his resignation as Bishop of Autun, or rather, according to the new style, of Saône-et-Loire. The diocese immediately elected the curate, Gouttes, in his place. As if he wished to confirm his resignation even to himself, he signed a letter written on February 8 as: "Talleyrand-Périgord, former Bishop of Autun."

But why did he again take up his cross and his mitre a little while later? Once again he was needed, and once again he dared not refuse lest he lose the benefits of his conversion to the Revolution. The constitutional church pretended to be in the tradition of the universal Church, and despite the anathemas of Rome, it fully intended to endure. How could it perpetuate itself if the newly elected bishops did not receive with their consecration the power to confer holy orders and even to consecrate? A bishop who was qualified through having been anointed himself was needed to consecrate the new episcopate. Expilly and Marolles, called to the seats of Quimper and of Soissons, were awaiting consecration; what bishop of the old order would perform the ceremony? Or rather, what bishops, for according to canonical law, the consecrator needed two assistants? Seven prelates had taken the oath, but could not bring themselves to the deed. "I swore," Jarente, Bishop of Orléans, answered pleasantly, "but I will not consecrate." Besides Talleyrand, there remained two bishops of less prestige, Gobel and Miroudot du Bourg, but someone better than these was needed to play the role of patriarch. Finally they came to Talleyrand, who, although he had resigned from his seat, retained from his own consecration the power to consecrate. He accepted.

The ceremony took place on February 24, 1791, in the Church of the Oratory. Talleyrand presided without enthusiasm but not without some inquietude. Certain persons faithful to the Church were so exasperated that he feared, or pretended to fear, an assault, and carried about two pistols which he showed everyone.

On March 24, he also installed the unfortunate Gobel in the seat of Paris (which he himself had first refused). Before four years were up, Gobel was to trample on his episcopal ornaments before the National

Convention. This was the last time that Talleyrand put on the mitre and officiated in his cloth-of-gold cope. With less clamor, he preceded Gobel in his apostasy, and not only rid himself of episcopal dignity, but also abandoned all religious practices. Having started the new church on its way, he left it to its unhappy fate, and quietly became a layman.

Just the same, Rome was determined to forbid to him the functions which he was setting aside. In his brief *Quod aliquanta caritas* of March 10, the Pope expressed the sorrow caused him by the attitude of the Bishop of Autun, and then, because of the sacrilegious ceremony of February 24, Pius VI declared him suspended and excommunicated. Talleyrand pretended to laugh it off. "You know the news about my excommunication," he wrote to his friend, Lauzun. "Come console me and dine with me. Everyone is going to refuse me bread and water, so this evening we shall have only jellied meats and we shall drink only chilled wines." This laughter does not ring true, for he must have been upset. He ascended the rostrum on May 7 to recommend the greatest liberalism in the use of religious buildings, but really to protest against the anathema and to declare that he was "confidently awaiting the inevitable return to principles essentially friendly to religion, either by the present pope when he saw the truth, or by his successor."

The diocese which he had deserted had arisen. Ever since the proposal to confiscate church property, the upper clergy had openly condemned every action of its bishop, while the latter had replied haughtily to all the remonstrances made by the canons of his cathedral. Once the oath had been taken, he provoked even livelier attacks by urging "the ecclesiastical functionaries of the department of Saône-et-Loire" to do their "duty," as he was. Bursting with indignation, the curates showed their disdain. "Your apostasy surprises no one," they wrote. "Being in such disgrace that nothing can debase or degrade you in public opinion, you should aspire only to the consummation of your iniquity and to the gathering of its fruits. . . . Infamy in this world, reprobation in the other, what a lot! To think that it was a pontiff of our holy religion, a successor of the apostles, who wanted to drag us down into the abyss with him . . . !"

While his spiritual family reproved him so harshly, his natural family disowned him. Having refused to take the oath, his uncle, the Archbishop of Rheims, had emigrated and was joined at Brunswick by the mother of the unfrocked priest, the Countess Daniel, who for two years had watched her son's progress in apostasy with bitter tears. She never forgave him for it. Much later, when he had attained the highest honors, Talleyrand, then Prince de Bénévent, would see the return of

many friends, including his two younger brothers, who in 1790 and 1791 were scandalized by his conduct, but until her death in 1809, his mother continued to beg God to forgive the frightful error she had made in forcing her son into the priesthood, since he had betrayed the Church and dishonored his name and that of his family.

5

OUTSIDE OF FRANCE

Mirabeau and Talleyrand

HIS ELECTION to the department of Paris marked the return of the ex-Bishop of Autun to secular life, which he had really hardly ever left. Now he was simply a high official of the new state. This election was slight compensation for the disappointment caused by the Assembly's keeping its own members from power. Even more aspiring than Talleyrand, Mirabeau was determined to pass this barrier, and Talleyrand, with the same thought in mind, had joined himself even more closely with this man for the past year. They felt the need of each other, perhaps because they were so very different; the powerful tribune needed the clever politician, who could thread his way among all the committees, and the schemer needed this "eloquent monster," who seemed about to seize control of the Assembly again and to dominate it for a while. Together, these two men, perhaps the most remarkable of the leaderless Assembly, might succeed in curbing the "stubborn beast," as Mirabeau called it. To give them their due, they were too intelligent not to see that the Revolution was heading for a terrible catastrophe, and they wanted to seize control of the Assembly in order to make it react against its own excesses, to direct it, and through it to enter the realm of great affairs. But when they thought they were about to succeed, they suddenly saw it escape and start acting wildly again.

Then they both turned towards other goals. The former Count de Mirabeau and the former Bishop of Autun, who had gone over to the side of the Revolution accompanied by curses from their own circles, deserters from the two first Estates, and, consequently, hateful to their fellows, still hoped to control, if not the Assembly, then its adversary, the Court. Although they had been leaders in creating the most serious revolutionary measures, though they seemed to be in the vanguard of democracy, they were still monarchists at heart; if the King, the Queen, and their entourage would entrust themselves to them, they could still save the throne. Let the Court take cognizance of the situation and

face the facts. Then, supported by the reasonable men of the Left, the Court should authorize them to fight to save what could be saved from the demagogues, and these reasonable men would help the King to regain what he had lost. When the time came, the King could reward them by having them collaborate in matters of restoration.

More daring than Talleyrand, Mirabeau was already engaged in his risky secret conversations with the sovereigns, and came away from them either drunk with hope or full of rage, depending on whether he thought the King and Queen convinced by his ideas or whether he had run up against their constantly reappearing distrust of him. He made no mystery of his plans to Talleyrand, who encouraged him and nothing more, since he was already the man of whom Dalberg said to Vitrolles twenty-three years later, "You don't know this monkey; he wouldn't risk burning the tip of his paw even when the chestnuts would be his alone." He let Mirabeau try to draw the chestnuts out of the fire, and took no chances until the day when his bold companion was no longer with him.

They entered the department of Paris together, and, having been chosen by "moderate" electors, they hoped to have their secret policy prevail when the time came. The more enterprising Mirabeau soon had himself made a member of the "directorate" of the department, to which the crafty Talleyrand had hesitated to penetrate right away. The tribune hoped to make use of this directorate against the Assembly itself some day, and Talleyrand was helping with the plans for this future battle, when Mirabeau's sudden death seemed to ruin everything. They were so close at this time that Talleyrand was one of the first to rush to the deathbed. "The confessor is worthy of the penitent," sneered their enemies. The tribune handed over to his confidant the speech which he had intended to deliver a few days later on the law of succession, and charged him to read it from the rostrum. Then turning his already dim eyes towards the ex-bishop, he sighed, "Ah, my friend, I am taking the remains of the Monarchy with me." Talleyrand alone could realize the meaning of these words that seemed so strange, and yet so true, from one who had done so much to destroy the throne.

The day after Mirabeau's death, Talleyrand appeared on the rostrum to read the tribune's last words, and it was he who pronounced the panegyric at the funeral services. Then, no doubt with the idea of continuing his secret enterprise, he sought and received Mirabeau's place in the directorate, and without asking for an interview, he had set before the King the same counsel which Mirabeau had given more boldly but in vain. Thus the Court knew that it could count on a "friend."

But the Court was even less tempted by the support of the apostate bishop than by that of the revolutionary demagogue.

When the Assembly closed its session, Talleyrand remained in the directorate of the department, joining his colleagues in a very moderate attitude, which could have provoked the rancor of certain groups in the new Legislative Assembly who wanted a new "revolutionary attack." But he was not the man to risk his head. Doubtless he deplored the increasingly violent conduct of the Revolution, but he was so deeply compromised that he could view the least counter-revolutionary movement only with fear. He no longer even thought of resisting the torrent, as he once had under the influence of the powerful Mirabeau. "I am ready for whatever happens," he wrote. "The Revolution promises the nation a new destiny; I shall follow its course and run the risks."

The mission to England

Perhaps he was resolved to "follow its course," but he was not resolved to "run *every* risk." In the beginning of 1792, he wrote more truthfully that he "wanted to get away," since he was "tired and disgusted." We may well believe that he was disgusted, for all his life this aristocrat hated any sort of excess, especially that committed by the mob. And if he was disgusted, he certainly must have begun to feel somewhat alarmed as well. There was no place for him in the Paris of late 1792, but in critical times such a conspicuous man could not suddenly change his role from actor to spectator. Things were happening very quickly, and if they passed him by, it was not without giving him a few jolts.

There was no question of emigration, however. The best he could do was to withdraw under the pretext of serving the new France somewhere beyond her boundaries. War was in sight. Europe was arming with the idea of profiting by "the troubles of the realm." At Paris one party was almost trying to hasten the event. The Count de Narbonne, called to the ministry of war, was in charge of preparing the war. He was Talleyrand's dear friend, a habitué of the Rue de Bellechasse, and since he was a rather sceptical, liberal gentleman of a Voltairean turn of mind, he had not broken with the "apostate." Narbonne presented him to his colleague, Valdec de Lessart, Minister of Foreign Relations, who was trying to find some outside support for France, since she was being threatened by the German powers. Hardly anything was to be found. England, whose secret agents had contributed not a little to the unleashing of the Revolution, was the only country whose attitude was not formally hostile. Before the continent mobilized, it would be

expedient for France to transform this coldly expectant attitude into benevolent neutrality, if not into an alliance.

William Pitt, who was then in power, was said to be hostile to a war and perhaps might be influenced to adopt more actively favorable opinions. During his stay at Rheims in 1783, the young Abbé de Périgord had had the opportunity to meet the son of the great Lord Chatham, this "second Pitt," who at twenty-three, having already received and resigned a portfolio, was clearly marked for the highest destiny. For six weeks, the two young men had hardly left each other, and although his acquaintance with William had not been very actively kept up, Talleyrand must have boasted about it to Narbonne. When Lessart had been informed, he offered the ex-bishop a purely unofficial mission, the only sort, according to a recent law, which could be entrusted to a former member of the Constitutional Assembly. Since he was simply looking for an alibi, Talleyrand asked no more. He arrived in London on January 24, 1792, carrying a letter from Lessart which introduced him to Lord Grenville, head of the Foreign Office. He called on Pitt on the twenty-eighth.

The visit was a failure. The Prime Minister was suspicious of his old friend from Rheims, especially since *émigrés* to London had told him about the priest's strange career. Moreover, though he certainly did not want to be dragged into a general war by the continental powers, he had no love for France. He listened coolly to Talleyrand's speeches. Grenville, who had had his orders, was not much more receptive, and the English sovereigns, George III and his Queen, especially, were cold to the point of rudeness.

Talleyrand was bitterly disillusioned, for he personally liked England and sincerely wanted an alliance with her. "In 1792," he told Lamartine forty years later, "I tried to form an alliance between liberal England and revolutionary France that would have been the world's balancing point."

"Two neighboring nations," he said in 1792, "whose prosperity is based respectively on trade and on agriculture, are made to get along well together by the very nature of things and to enrich each other." It was in these terms that Talleyrand told Lessart of the idea to which he remained faithful all his life. It was not Lessart, however, whom he had to convince, but Pitt, Grenville, and the English cabinet. Talleyrand was greatly embarrassed by his conferences with these ministers. Grenville considered him a "profound but dangerous man," and his distrust came out in his equivocal refusals, while Pitt would not warm up to him. Determined to change their minds and to sound out the opposi-

tion, the emissary saw Fox, Sheridan, and Lansdowne, and even though they were of the opposition, he met with the same reception.

On the continent the war was daily drawing nearer. New men, the "Girondin" ministers, had replaced Narbonne and Lessart and they were determined to bring things to a head by themselves declaring war on the House of Austria. Dumouriez of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, however, still sought allies for France. He was trying to attract Prussia, but even more to win the good will of England. Talleyrand came to Paris to confer with him on March 10. War was declared on Austria on April 20, so something had to be done in a hurry. Since the absurd decision of the Constitutional Assembly had forbidden public office to its members, Talleyrand could not be the official ambassador. The title was given to the ex-Count de Chauvelin, a career diplomat, with the understanding that he would act in agreement with Talleyrand, who was unofficially sent back to London. The latter redoubled his efforts, but all he could achieve was the declaration of May 25 by which England simply announced her neutrality. Even liberal English opinion was alienated because of the alarm and indignation aroused by the goings-on at Paris. The people's invasion of the Tuileries on June 20, when the King was forced to put on the red cap of the Revolution, had a terrible effect, and Talleyrand dashed to Paris to warn the ministers. He still belonged to the directorate of the department, which protested against the violence done to the King and suspended Mayor Pétion, who was held responsible. The Legislative Assembly, however, re-instated Pétion, and Talleyrand and his colleagues resigned. But on August 10, the throne fell and violence triumphed.

More than ever before, Talleyrand felt that the French ground was shaking beneath his feet. He saw the great threats, the pressing dangers, the coming violence, and realized that he was now hateful to certain revolutionaries. He had to get out of France at any price, but he intended to leave only with the excuse of going on a "mission," thus taking care of the future. He went to the new Executive Councilor, who had been elected by the Assembly on August 10.

The Councilor was Danton, who had reached the ministry like "a cannon ball." As an intelligent man, he was well aware of all that was lacking to govern a convulsed country, invaded by the Germans and threatened by Europe. He had to form some foreign policy to deal with the march of the two great German powers on the Paris basin. The Councilor had hardly been installed before he received a note from Talleyrand. Two months earlier, the latter had protested against the

outrage of June 20, but now he seemed to forget all about the August 10 revolution. A few days later, he put himself at the Councilor's disposal and sent him a note about the relations which France should maintain with England. Danton knew what use he could make of the ex-bishop, but he dared not employ him openly. He received the diplomat in his usual jovial fashion, questioned him intelligently, seemed to agree with his opinions, but he could only authorize his return to London by giving him a regular passport. This was all Talleyrand wanted. "My real aim," he wrote, "was to leave France, where it seemed useless and even dangerous for me to remain." He left Paris on September 10, and as soon as he reached London, he began a personal inquiry into the state of popular opinion, which proved rather discouraging. England now seemed inclined to give up its neutrality only to attack France, a state of affairs which seemed to Talleyrand still another reason to increase his efforts. He addressed to Lebrun, Minister of Foreign Relations, his famous memorandum of November 26, 1792, really intended for Danton, and in his examination of the possibilities of an alliance with Great Britain, he revealed himself as a broad-minded, clear-sighted diplomat. Danton appreciated him and would gladly have employed him, but soon everything went awry.

The commissars of the Convention discovered a great many secret papers at the Tuileries, among them Talleyrand's two notes of April 20 and May 3, 1791, in which he had offered his services, or at least his advice, to Louis XVI. Already suspect to the "pure," Talleyrand was denounced as a traitor who had wanted to sell himself to "Capet." The Convention decreed on December 5 that "the accusation against Talleyrand-Périgord, ex-Bishop of Autun, was justified, and that seals would immediately be affixed to his papers." In spite of the skillful defense which the accused sent from London on December 12 and which was published in the *Monitor* on the 24th, the Convention did not revoke its decree, and when the list of *émigrés* was announced on March 28, 1793, the name of the ex-Bishop of Autun appeared along with those of seventeen members of his family, all of whom disowned him.

His visit to the United States

He thought of staying in London, where he had found a group of "liberal" *émigrés,* such as Narbonne, Jaucourt, Lally Tollendal, and, above all, Necker's daughter, the brilliant Germaine de Staël. They were all waiting for something, but what? "Several years of doing nothing but exist," wrote Talleyrand to Mme de Staël, "and if there should be a counter-revolution in our sense of the word, we should join it; if there

should be one in another sense, then we should go on waiting." He maintained his relations with the Whig opposition. Pitt was disturbed, but tolerated his agitations for several months. Then suddenly Talleyrand received orders in the shape of the Alien Bill to leave England.

He protested, complained, and sought for delays, but was he really so sorry to leave? Between the suspicious English government and the hostile royalist emigration, he had been in a difficult position for months. After the execution of Louis XVI, England had joined the continental coalition and had quickly become an implacable, determined, and enterprising enemy. To be expelled by Pitt's order under such circumstances was, as far as the future was concerned, the equivalent of being cleared of the accusation of emigration and almost of being certified as a revolutionary citizen.

He set sail for America, settled at Philadelphia, touched upon New England, instructed himself in this new world, and tried to remake his fortune by speculation in land and in various commodities. He was a born speculator, and brought a real passion to it, for he was the man who always proclaimed that "first and foremost, you must be rich." The Revolution had impoverished him to the point of ruin. "Reason tells me," he wrote to Germaine de Staël on May 12, 1794, "that we must remake our fortunes a bit in order to avoid continual dependence." His outlook was broadened through his acquaintance with this new, ardent, enterprising democracy, with customs completely different from those he had known, with a way of thinking completely different from that which directed French policy, whether rightist or leftist.

But it was in the new France that he hoped to practice what he had learned in America. He knew that after the reign of the men of violence, France would know the reign of the profiteers. During the Terror, soon after Robespierre's fall in Thermidor, year II, the palmy days began. A new society was being created, a society of parvenus, enriched by the enormous benefits that both wars and revolutions bring to profiteers. With the outlets opened by the war and the Revolution, there was an enormous upsurge of speculation, at its height in 1795. This society of speculators dominated politics. In such a gross, ignoble, heartless as well as senseless society, what a place could be made for a man who had inherited the subtlety of the old order, but not its troublesome conscience!

From the end of 1792 to the beginning of 1795, he was in retirement in which he could think over his earlier life, which was so full of experiences. He kept many of his ideas, but all trace of decent feelings vanished. He knew that he was disgraced, despised, excommunicated,

and disowned by all those whom he had betrayed, but he was not troubled by remorse or even uneasiness. Even his fidelity to the traditional monarchy, which he had retained after the loss of all his other ties, had vanished. He wrote from London in November 1793, "The House of Bourbon is a thing of the past in France." He had really done some thinking during his stay in America. After having freed himself from the altar, he had freed himself from the throne. He had by no means become a republican. The spectacle of American democracy had not converted him. It was his opinion that Frenchmen would never get used to a republican government after the monarchical discipline of fifteen centuries of royalty. After a debauch of demagogic madness, they would seek a man to lead them away from anarchy. He must be ready to work for the restoration of a throne whose supports would be the very men whom the revolutionaries had proscribed.

"If I stay a year here, I'll die," he wrote from America to Mme de Staël, who had regained her influence. He wanted her to pave the way for his return. But since she delayed answering, he sent the Convention a petition, in which he appealed to the Assembly of 1795 as being better informed than that of 1793, and, after enumerating his many services to the Revolution, he asked to have his name struck from the list of *émigrés,* where it should never have been written.

Germaine de Staël had prepared the ground. This vivacious woman had her faults, but she also had one magnificent trait: she was faithful, actively faithful, to her friends. And she always felt much more than friendship for Talleyrand. For the sake of her unjustly exiled friend, as she called him, she spared no pains and got Marie-Joseph Chénier, a member of the Convention, to espouse his cause. On September 4, 1795, during one of the last meetings of the Assembly, Chénier went to the rostrum and demanded justice for "one of the founders of liberty," "honored like us," he added, "in being hated by tyrants and slaves." "I beseech you," he concluded, "in the name of the Republic which he can still serve with his talents and his deeds." During the meeting, the Convention had the accusatory decree of 1792 brought in, and the name of "Citizen Talleyrand-Périgord" was struck from the list of *émigrés*. He was overcome with joy when he received the news six weeks later, and wrote to Germaine, "Wherever you live, the rest of my life will be passed near you." This was promising too much, and he did not keep his word.

But he was still the prudent man whose life-long motto was "never be in a hurry." When his return had been authorized, he did not dash to the first outgoing packet-boat. He waited about seven months. The Convention was about to dissolve and the new government, the Di-

rectory, was being installed. Was the era of convulsions over? Would it not be better to wait until the situation was a little clearer? Although he had been informed in the beginning of the autumn that he was no longer banned, he waited until June 13, 1796 to embark on the Danish ship, *Den Ny Praeve* (The New Trial), whose name seemed almost symbolic under the circumstances.

6

THE APPROACH TO POWER

Hesitation

"M. DE TALLEYRAND-PÉRIGORD, former Bishop of Autun, a privileged *émigré,* arrived in Paris four days ago." So read the *Republican Courier* of Vendémiaire 4, year V (September 23, 1796), which told the news with some bitterness. He had disembarked at Hamburg on July 31, tarried there a while, visited Amsterdam—always with the idea that a governmental crisis was imminent, and that it would be worth while "never to hurry." He had not moved into Paris when he returned there on September 21, but had sought the hospitality of friends in the village of Auteuil. He saw Mme de Staël as well as some intellectuals of the Revolution who were watching the latest events with a certain uneasiness. During those uncertain times, the newcomer was able to sound out the territory over which he intended to advance.

For a year this ground had not been safe beneath anyone's feet. The Directory, composed of five regicides from the Convention, was far from stable. It had been imposed upon the nation during a period of anti-revolutionary reaction by assemblies which were themselves discredited, since they were the result of a blow against electoral liberty. The nation had not accepted this act of parliamentary violence. The counter-revolution was making formidable progress, and the majority of the country was clearly determined to get rid of the Jacobin oligarchy. They were waiting for Vendémiaire, year V, when the first re-election of the Councils was to take place. Royalists who had been crushed on Vendémiaire 13, year IV, and moderate liberals who had been kept from voting freely, were both preparing revenge and united to elect only the opponents of the Jacobins to the Councils. Just as Talleyrand returned to Paris, the elections were having the expected results: of the 216 outgoing deputies, former members of the Convention, 205 were eliminated on the spot, and the 205 new deputies were all determined to unite with the 150 who had been raising lively opposition to the Jacobin Directory for over a year and were trying to eliminate the governing

personnel. Although the royalists constituted only a limited group in this new majority, they were too enterprising not to try to get control of the movement of reaction. From Auteuil Talleyrand followed the progress of the counter-revolution closely.

Naturally, he was for a counter-revolution, but a moderate one. He had disapproved of the excesses which followed the fall of the throne, detested and distrusted Jacobinism and the Jacobins even more, and would gladly have joined with those who wanted to destroy the revolutionary oligarchy with the aim of founding a liberal republic or a constitutional monarchy. But he was afraid that the movement of reaction would end up as a simple purge of the personnel then in power and the return of the Bourbons. The exiled "Louis XVIII" was proclaiming in the most uncompromising fashion that all those who had helped the Revolution after May, 1789, would be punished. Because of his double betrayal of the Church and the Throne, Talleyrand was one of the first on the list. There is no doubt that if the Pretender had given him any pacifying assurances, he would gladly have seen the Republic go down with the Directory, but he was afraid because of the rumors which reached him about the suspicious attitude which the princes and the pure royalists took towards him. Moreover, the counter-revolutionary coalition which, for the time being, was blockading the Directory, might soon suffer the weaknesses of all coalitions; possibly it was already secretly divided and possibly it would be crushed by the Jacobin oligarchy, which would defend itself unscrupulously by any means.

The National Institute

Before declaring himself, Talleyrand waited a while longer. He had an official title, which in those strange times had even political importance. The National Institute, a new Academy, was being formed. In his report on public instruction, Talleyrand had once preached the establishment of such an institution, and this was perhaps the reason that he was elected one of the first members on December 14, 1795, although he had not even returned to France. He belonged to the second classification of "moral and political sciences." Almost as soon as it had been formed, this National Institute acted less as a learned body than as a conservatory of pure revolutionary doctrine. Recruited almost entirely among artists, writers, scholars, and thinkers who had collaborated in the movement since 1789, and imbued with the "philosophic spirit," it became a congregation of the last disciples of the "Encyclopaedia" and of the learned doctors of the Revolution. Being admitted to this group was for Talleyrand a mark of citizenship, and a rather unusual tribute

to what might even be called the intellectual quality of his past career.

From the moment of his return, he intended to make a distinguished place for himself. Before the "united classes" of the Institute, he read a memorandum "on the advantages to be drawn from new colonies under present conditions," in which he raised the international question. Until 1792, Talleyrand had devoted his public life either to finances or to public education, but he had begun to turn towards the field of foreign policy ever since his mission to London and his attempt to ally England with France. While he was in America and far from war-torn Europe, he was able to study objectively the great problems of those troubled times. His thinking matured, and his ambition became focused on one goal: to enter the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Here we must pause. Talleyrand is about to embark upon a great career, and we must have a clear idea of his thought, which, despite apparent variations, remained unchanged.

In regard to international questions

Talleyrand thought that foreign relations were controlled by men who were incapable because they were ignorant. The traditions of high politics had been lost in the almost savage struggle of revolutionary France and monarchic Europe. Because French frontiers had been menaced, invaded, then reconquered, and French armies had reached their natural boundaries, French policy, like that of Europe, had been distorted by exaggeration. The kings of France, their great servitors, their foreign representatives had all hoped to attain their natural boundaries at some more or less distant date, but they had never let themselves be drawn into an enterprise which took centuries to realize. The most enlightened ministers, from Richelieu to Vergennes, had fixed their sights far beyond the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Rhine, and had looked to that world which, since the voyages of Vasco da Gama to the Indies and of Christopher Columbus to a new continent, had offered a much wider range to a statesman's vision. No one who served the Valois and the Bourbons ever doubted that someday the natural boundaries would be reached, but they thought that this plan would be realized of itself without suddenly snatching whole provinces from neighboring powers. For three centuries the balance of European powers had extended over the whole world. The conquest of the Indies by England, the uprising of the English colonies in America, perhaps a foreshadowing of many other secessions, the loss and the revolt of the French Antilles, the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the possible partition of its Asiatic and African territories, all these and other serious events

were opening new outlooks. In Europe itself, the dismemberment of Poland (the final partition had just taken place) destroyed the balance of the old continent, while three powers were greatly enriched.

From 1792 to 1795 the new France had reached its natural boundaries, and, puffed up by this success, the Committee of Public Welfare envisaged other campaigns beyond the Rhine, beyond the Alps, as part of a war of conquest, disguised as a war of propaganda, designed to surround the new "Gaul" with vassal states. Holland had been conquered by Pichegru in 1793, and while Hoche was crossing the Rhine, a young general who was just becoming known, Napoleon Bonaparte, was about to conquer all of Northern Italy and to threaten the rest of the peninsula. Territory after territory was snatched away from "the tyrants of Europe," and after the "people's chains" had been broken, new republics were created from Holland to Naples, daughters of the Great Republic, which in reality made up the boundaries of France, already so enlarged. There was talk of toppling all thrones, and of carrying the Rights of Man and of the Citizen to Moscow, Constantinople, and Cadiz. "France stands against tyrants."

One must recall the circumstances under which Talleyrand was to make his debut as a statesman, because he was personally opposed to the policies he was obliged to serve through ambition and tried to restrain them while working to have them abandoned.

Talleyrand had inherited the finesse of the old society and the prudence of traditional policy. Finesse and prudence had been sadly lacking in the handling of the relations between the Revolution and the rest of Europe. When threatened by the German powers, France thrust back. When invaded in the summer of 1792, she in turn invaded in the autumn of 1792. But she developed no carefully thought-out system from her victories and conquests. Perhaps Europe might have allowed the annexation of even such sizable territories as Belgium, the Rhineland, and Savoy, but how could monarchic Europe do anything but constantly oppose a country that was not content with excessive aggrandizement but wanted to destroy all other states in the name of certain principles? Between the Revolution and the Thrones there was a fight to the death, which, while it might stop for a little while, would not be over until one of the adversaries had succumbed.

Nothing was more contrary to the diplomatic tradition of the *Ancien Régime* than a fight to the death, nothing more contrary than excessive and too rapidly executed conquests. International politics in the grand style is a game that lasts for centuries, and from Louis XI to Richelieu, from Richelieu to Choiseul and to Vergennes, the French statesman who

knew his business was intent upon this game, advancing his men on the right or left without ever upsetting the chess board. There were traditional alliances with the Scandinavian states, Poland, and even Turkey; there were occasional alliances with German and Italian princes; there were even "family alliances." But the game was always going on.

Instead of the brutal conquest of provinces and of entire countries, as was the practice of revolutionary France, a policy in the old tradition was broached, aiming to make such acquisitions the means of restoring the balance of power which had been destroyed by the partitions of Poland. To the profit of the English, France in the eighteenth century had lost her colonial empire, which extended from the Indies to Louisiana, from Canada to Senegal. Indeed, she had had her revenge by helping the North American colonies free themselves from British rule, but she gained only a mite of land. Soon others might follow the example of the Anglo-Saxon colonists of New England; perhaps the other European colonies, the Spanish and the French as well as the English, might set themselves up as states. Before she lost the Antilles, the remains of her colonial empire, France had to find new colonies, which, possibly by being less distant than the old ones, could be more easily defended. Such possessions would occupy the warlike spirit of her soldiers and their exploitation would make room for emigration. With such a project, France would be turned aside from that mad enterprise of conquering Europe, which, from 1793 to 1797, from the Zuider Zee to the Po valley, had caused perpetual war.

Such were Talleyrand's ideas, formed by the traditions he had inherited, by his own reflections, and above all by the characteristic cast of his mind.

This mind was never led into anything imprudent. Nothing about him was like the statesmen who dreamed of hegemony. This son of a long line of soldiers would gladly avoid all armed enterprises, all combats, even if victorious, and military conquests which called for other conquests to sustain them. Like the statesmen of the *Ancien Régime,* he had hoped, before 1789, that by a series of negotiations, clever moves, and exchanges, France would reach her natural boundaries, but she had conquered them too abruptly in 1792 to avoid a reaction by Europe. How could the reactions of Europe be avoided? By a wise policy which would be content with these boundaries and which would sooth the rancor of Europe. No one was more opposed than Talleyrand to the Italian campaign, which a contemporary historian, Ferrero, sees as the starting point of all European "adventures" for a century and a

half. And Talleyrand remained hostile to all the "adventures" which led the French for the next fifteen years from the reconquered boundaries to the heart of Germany and the end of Italy, then to Poland and Spain, and finally to downfall in Russia. Certainly in 1797 he could not foresee such an extension of the dream of hegemony. But if Europe was exposed to the French armies of expansion, it was because England had deprived France of her colonial empire fifty years earlier and she could find no other outlet for her desire for expansion, so natural to the sons of Celts. Consequently it was necessary to find new colonies soon and open them for French enterprise.

This was the subject of the memorandum "on the advantages of new colonies" read in a public meeting of the Institute on Messidor 15, year V (July 3, 1797). The setting up of a colonial empire was in such accord with tradition that, even though the *Ancien Régime* had been in disgrace since 1789, Talleyrand did not hesitate to place his ideas under the patronage of the Duke de Choiseul, whom he had gone to consult at Chanteloup fifteen years before. "The Duke de Choiseul," declared Citizen Talleyrand-Périgord, "one of the men most gifted with foresight in our century, who in 1769 anticipated the separation of America from England and feared the partition of Poland, sought at that time to prepare negotiations for the cession of Egypt to France, so that we could be ready to replace the products of our American colonies the moment we lost them."

The winning of a portfolio

The speech had some celebrity and marked its author as one interested in a career in foreign affairs, but under that wretched government which was so base in every respect, one could not count on some fine ideas set forth during a meeting of the Institute to do anything for their originator. A little intrigue was needed. Here we seize this double Talleyrand on the wing: a cultivated nobleman and a scheming politician, a man of thought and a man of intrigue, capable both of elevated thoughts and low tricks.

At this time the Republic reached the crisis towards which it had been heading for months. The Councils were openly battling against the Directory; they were going to corner the directors so that they would have to give in or resign. When attacked on the disgraceful financial question, the Directory could hardly defend itself. Certain of its members, Barras and Reubell, were suspected of underhand dealings for the profit of a band of accomplices, and their colleagues, Carnot, La Revellière-Lépaux, Letourneur, and then Barthélemy who replaced

him, were not tempted to join forces with the suspects. It seemed as if the Directory, divided within itself, would give up. But on the other hand, the majority was not really united. Some members simply wanted to purge the government of unhealthy elements and establish a "real republic"; others, such as Camille Jordan, wanted especially to abolish all the anti-religious laws and to restore liberty to the Catholics; still others, thinly disguised royalists, wanted the restoration of the Bourbons. These groups were united only in their opposition to the government, but they all were as uncertain of their aims as they were of the methods they wished to employ.

Until the end of Messidor, the outcome of the battle remained uncertain. Like many ambitious men, Talleyrand hesitated several months about joining the "carrion" of the Directory. His ideas on foreign policy really tied him more closely to the majority of the Councils, hostile on principle to the continuation of war which was planned by the Directory. He still feared, however, a reaction which, if carried to extremes, might bring the return of the Bourbons and the proscription of most of the people involved in the Revolution. In the face of such danger, these people were gathering together all those who had benefited from the Revolution, from those who had acquired national property to upstart soldiers, counting on them to join in protecting the Directory. In opposition to the "Clichy Club," made up of the outstanding leaders of the counter-revolutionary party, there arose the so-called "Constitutional Club," dedicated to keeping the Jacobin oligarchy in power. Talleyrand stood halfway between the two parties, but, hiding his perplexity behind an impenetrable mask, he kept on good terms with everybody, and already even the revolutionaries who had worked for his recall were denouncing his duplicity.

The "party that would pay him a salary" was the party of the Directory; the promised salary was a post in the Ministry. Mme de Staël, who had taken her friend into her heart and her bed, had set herself up for a while as the Egeria of the Republican party, sending into the battle Benjamin Constant, who shared her favors with Talleyrand. Constant had been one of the founders of the Constitutional Club which supported the Directory, but behind him was Necker's high-spirited daughter, who became *persona grata* as far as Barras was concerned. She alone could obtain the portfolio of which her friend dreamed, but Talleyrand had to give some guarantee of his good faith. Consequently he joined the Constitutional Club. "Abbé Maurice's letter," wrote Chénier, "proves to me that after having been an anarchist, an Orléanist, and having been unable to be a Robespierrist, he has become a Directorist, while

waiting to assume whatever shape power will have later on. That blackguard is like a sponge that soaks up everything in which it is dipped, with the difference that a sponge, when squeezed, will give up what it has taken in, while everything is considered a lawful prize by our friend." Chénier was unusually perspicacious.

Barras had to be persuaded to take up Talleyrand and force him upon his colleagues. The difficulty was that the ex-Bishop wanted nothing but the portfolio of Foreign Relations. The portfolio belonged to Charles Delacroix, a good Republican and a faithful party servant. Talleyrand conducted a cruel and unrelenting campaign of vilification against the poor man, as he well knew how. When the diplomatic game demanded nimbleness, how could they keep this churl, whose enormous tumor in the lower abdomen made him a ridiculous monster and an invalid incapable of devoting himself to his ministerial tasks? Delacroix, who was seriously ill, was removed from office. No one did more than Talleyrand to have his portfolio taken from him, and to top things off, he did not delay in taking his wife, too. Everyone knew that "clever Maurice" had worked his way into the good graces of his predecessor's wife and that young Eugène, born April 26, 1798, the future great painter, was not the son of the poor discarded invalid but of the man who had caused his downfall. Twenty-five years later all Paris was marveling over the astonishing resemblance of the famous Eugène Delacroix and Prince de Talleyrand, who, with a tender pride not at all characteristic of him, followed the initial success of the artist.

Charles Delacroix was discharged, and his post was vacant, but did it necessarily follow that Talleyrand would occupy it? Such was certainly not the opinion of the directors, La Revellière and Reubell, who had known him in the Constitutional Assembly, thought him a "dangerous plotter"; Carnot, who did not mince words, saw in this man "without principles" "all the vices of the old regime and none of the virtues of the new." This was the general opinion. "His character is strong, his gifts well-known," wrote a certain foreign minister, "but his morality is corrupted and depraved."

Such considerations meant nothing to Barras. The two men were made to please each other, and they did. The former Viscount de Barras and the former Count de Talleyrand were two roués, perfect products of the decline of the *Ancien Régime*. Both had betrayed their class and had thrown themselves into the movement with the same lack of generosity, the same calculating cynicism, and the same disdain for the poor wretches they had to push aside, and their minds, though of unequal value, were of the same depravity.

If Barras really was hesitant for a few weeks, it was only because he wanted to make Talleyrand appreciate the favor he was granting. He finally told Benjamin Constant that in spite of severe opposition by his colleagues, he was yielding to Germaine de Staël's wishes by agreeing to the candidacy of Citizen Talleyrand. Constant hurried to Talleyrand, whom he found in the company of his friend, Boniface de Castellane, who has left an account of the scene. Exalted by joy, the new minister threw his arms about the two men and said, "Let's go thank Barras." While a carriage was taking them to the Luxembourg, he kept repeating with a sort of desperation, "I'll hold the job, I have to make an immense fortune out of it, a really immense fortune." When he was officially named on Messidor 30, year V (July 18, 1797), he went to the ministry on Rue du Bac, where poor Charles Delacroix handed over his portfolio, and without delay, the "immense fortune" began to pile up.

7

THE MINISTRY UNDER THE DIRECTORY

"Other men's works"

"I KNOW that several people, not at that time (year V of the Republic) but since the Restoration, have found it wrong to accept an office in a time of crisis and revolution, when it is absolutely impossible to do good. It has always seemed to me that there is something very superficial in judgments of this sort. In worldly affairs, you must not think only of the present, which is not of much account, usually, when you think of what it will produce in the future. As a matter of fact, to get any where, you have to start."

In such a fashion old Prince de Talleyrand tried to explain why he had accepted a high office from the unworthy hands of the Directory. How many meritorious sacrifices he made, not only under the Directory, but later under all the governments he served though he disapproved of them! "You do a good deed when you consent to be the editor responsible for other men's works. . . . You accept not for the sake of serving displeasing men or things, but in order to turn them to the profit of the future." Here the old fellow must have laid down his pen, well satisfied with a fine phrase.

He went to a great deal of trouble to explain something very simple. Talleyrand had a passionate desire to be a minister, and kept this desire under the Republic, under the Empire, and under the Restoration. He drew such profits from his "job" that it is hard to admit that he sought it and kept it only to be able to "sacrifice his tranquillity" to "the future of France." It is true that in order to win and hold on to the position he had to "sacrifice" many of his personal ideas and opinions as well as his secret sympathies and antipathies.

When he had just taken over this position, everything was being prepared to enforce and to perpetuate the form of foreign policy which he liked the least, but which he had undertaken to serve as Minister of Foreign Relations. This is what he called making himself "the editor responsible for other people's works."

The policy was that which the Committee of Public Welfare, intoxicated by the victories of the Republic, had willed to the first Directory: a war of conquest in Europe, and then, after the acquisition of natural frontiers, the foundation of vassal states beyond these limits, forming a barrier from the North Sea to the Mediterranean between hostile Europe and the new Gaul. The policy that Talleyrand wanted to practice was exactly the opposite, since its aim was peace and, after the recognition of France's "constitutional limits" by Europe, a solid understanding between the young Republic and the old Thrones. Under the Directory as well as under Napoleon, he was able only to insinuate this policy, and he was never able to make his successive masters envisage it. Here he is presenting the Treaty of Campo-Formio to the Directory: "May everlasting thanks be given to the Directory, which knew when it was time to stop its triumphs . . . , which felt that true greatness is that which limits itself, true strength that which restrains itself." This is Talleyrand at his best, but what is he celebrating? This treaty, which the land-hungry Directory thought too moderate, consecrated the subordination of Italy to France, a condition to which Austria and Europe as well never sincerely agreed, and which was an obstacle to international understanding from the time of the first "continental peace." Talleyrand praised moderation when immoderation had just triumphed.

This attitude is not really astonishing, since from the very beginning the minister had tried to become *persona grata* to the soldier whose victories counseled, authorized, and almost imposed this immoderation.

Bonaparte

When Talleyrand received his post as Minister of Foreign Relations, Bonaparte was at the height of his success. Having conquered the Austrians in every engagement and having brought Italy under his control, he imposed an armistice on the enemy which gave the whole Po valley to France (April 18, 1797). The General immediately set about negotiating peace as a plenipotentiary of the Republic, and from the castle of Mombello near Milan, where he held a sort of court and received homage, he really reigned over Italy and treated personally with Austria. He made it clear that he would make a peace which seemed suitable to him, whether or not it pleased Paris, a peace which would assure French domination of the Mediterranean with no sacrifice of her natural boundaries.

Talleyrand was too clever and too well informed not to have realized that the conqueror of Rivoli and the negotiator of Leoben was the man

of the future. Without bothering about any authorization from the Directory, the new Minister of Foreign Relations addressed his first letter to the proconsul of Mombello. "Properly impressed by duties of whose painful importance I am aware," he wrote, "I need the assurance of knowing that your glory will lend certain means and facility into the negotiations. The very name of Bonaparte is a help that should smooth over everything."

The words were flattering, but how especially pleasing was the style, so different from the flat, rude tone assumed by the Jacobins, which had always rubbed the well-born young soldier the wrong way. This showed up clearly in his reply. "The Government's choice of you as its Minister of Foreign Relations does honor to its discernment. It proves your great talents, your pure citizenship, and shows that you are a man to whom the excesses which disgraced the Revolution are foreign. I am flattered to become your correspondent, which should convince you of the esteem and high regard I have for you." Talleyrand was flattered in turn; he divined a gentleman in this soldier, "some one different from what he seemed to be." The relationship which began so happily assumed such a character that it played a dominant role in the life of both men.

The Directory, however, had just strengthened itself—or so it seemed. Talleyrand's decision to join the directorial side in Messidor showed that his judgment was still serving him well. The violent but uncertain opposition of the Councils had given the Directory the will to resist and the strength to conquer. With the help of the soldiers of Augereau, the "Republicans" reinforced their power by a *coup d'état* on Fructidor 18 which destroyed national representation. Two directors were proscribed and their places were given to two dyed-in-the-wool Jacobins, François de Neufchâteau and Merlin de Douai. Finally, Barras remained at the head of things.

"The tone of the negotiations should be even more elevated," wrote Talleyrand to Bonaparte. By giving all his assurances to the Republican party on Fructidor 18, he suddenly stood erect before all of Europe which, being badly informed by Royalist agents, had wrongly taken the Republic for lost and had built upon that error. For weeks conferences had been going on with Lord Malmesbury, the English plenipotentiary, who had dragged them on and on in the hope of a counter-revolutionary triumph. The day after the *coup d'état,* the Directory broke off negotiations; war to the death with England, which was now threatened with invasion. Conferences were begun with Tsar Paul to prevent him from joining the alliance, but Paul had nothing but con-

tempt for the Jacobins, who had the unbelievable aim of trying to win him over. The parleys with the Tsar were also broken off. Austria, which was negotiating with Bonaparte, momentarily pretended that she would cede Lombardy only if the Republic would give up all or part of the Rhineland. Then Bonaparte offered to hand over Venice, which had suddenly been occupied, in exchange for Lombardy. The Directory, however, swelled up with pride, did not want to pay either for Lombardy or the Rhineland, and intended to keep Venice as well. The directors issued these ultimata from Paris through Bonaparte, who firmly intended to conclude the peace in order to enjoy its benefits. Austria would never agree to the peace if she were called upon to give up everything for nothing. Therefore the General resisted the orders from Paris, something which he might not have dared had he not known that there was a certain prudent man in the Ministry whose political opinions were really quite different from those of the Luxembourg.

Talleyrand sought only to give satisfaction to Austria. Supposing that Bonaparte, putting his armies on the march again, should reach Vienna and there impose the kind of peace the Directory wanted, what would be gained? At the first opportunity Austria might take up arms again with all of Europe, including Russia, behind her. Would Venice, moreover, allow France to turn Lombardy and then the rest of the peninsula into a vassal state? For the time being, the minister certainly agreed with Bonaparte, rather than with the embattled Directory, that Austria and the Venetian state should receive just compensation for their losses. And when the great soldier signed the Treaty of Campo-Formio making a peace formed after his own ideas, Talleyrand snatched up his pen to congratulate him. "Congratulate" is an understatement, since the letter ends in a dithyramb. "Now peace is made, peace *à la* Bonaparte. Accept my heartfelt compliments, General . . . Perhaps there will be some clamor from the Italians (Venice), but that's nothing. Farewell, peace-making general; farewell, in friendship, admiration, respect, gratitude: I don't know where to stop in such a list."

Although it is clearly exaggerated, this great enthusiasm is still a little astonishing. Even if the treaty foiled the warlike extremism of the Directory, still it was a kind of consecration of the French conquests of Belgium, the Rhineland, and Lombardy, which left a wound in the flesh of Europe that Talleyrand thought would soon be infected. This unusual minister was not only pleased that the conquering hero had done the policy of his government an ill turn, but he was also determined to represent this peace to all as a triumph of that policy of "moderation"

which he wanted to prevail. After some bitter debates, the Directory agreed to sanction the treaty, and finally ratified it, despite its secret rage. Talleyrand's idea was to make everyone think that the Government had not submitted, but had so wished it. When the Directory received Monge and Berthier, the bearers of the treaty, at the Luxembourg, the minister addressed new dithyrambs to the Directory because it "knew that true greatness limits itself." The irony of this neat aphorism could be realized only by those who knew how bitterly the directors had opposed the treaty.

Talleyrand and his Ministry

Every day he grew to despise these mediocre directors more and more, and his contempt was strengthened by bitterness. The day after Fructidor 18, Talleyrand had hoped to obtain one of the two vacant directors' posts, for the protection of Barras could certainly have carried him to the Directory. Barras, however, was unwilling, thinking that since the *coup d'état* had been managed with the help of the old Jacobins, it was the old Jacobins who should profit by it. Consequently, François and Merlin, the two regicide members of the Convention, came to join the other three. Talleyrand was neither a former member of the Convention nor a regicide; he could be employed, but only as a subordinate. The Directory already tended to take all departmental action out of his hands. A foreign diplomat, Sandoz Rollin, wrote to his court that instructions to agents came not from the Ministry but from the Luxembourg. "They are planned and even written out in the office of the Directory. Talleyrand is nothing at all. He is Minister of Foreign Relations in name only and has not the slightest influence." Talleyrand was well aware of these facts and was mortified by them. Then why did he stay? Because the people in general thought that he had influence, even though the Prussian minister said he had none, and he turned this error into an opportunity to enrich himself. With neither scruple nor shame, he followed his lifelong rule that he would do nothing for nothing. The same Sandoz also wrote that "the Minister of Foreign Relations loves money, and has said boldly that when he leaves his post, he does not want to ask alms from the Republic." According to Barras, Talleyrand's "tips," after a year in office, were more than 100,000 livres. One may be sure that the minister's profits were large, since he practically threw money out the windows, furnished his residence at great cost, and had princely carriages built for himself. So he was all his life. "When Talleyrand is not plotting, he's trafficking," wrote Chateaubriand twenty years later.

The Directors were ignorant of none of these "deals," but on the other hand, Talleyrand was ignorant of none of theirs. "Everything can be bought here," a certain foreigner wrote. Strengthened by his masters' dishonesty, Talleyrand made his nonexistent influence pay well. He remained in the Ministry but he suffered a certain degradation, since he was thought so little of by people whom he secretly held in such low regard.

Since his contempt and hatred of his masters grew daily, he naturally turned towards the new star that was rising. When he had privately received Monge and Berthier upon their arrival from Italy, he had questioned them passionately about this Bonaparte whom he had never seen. The answers of the scholar and the soldier, who were then fanatically devoted to the young General, confirmed the minister's admiration. This admiration was doubled when he received the General's long letter in September, 1797 (Complémentaire 3, year V), in which he revealed his opinions of the Republic's domestic policy. By this astonishing mark of confidence, the great soldier showed that he was completely in opposition to current practice. When Bonaparte himself arrived on December 5, 1797, the minister literally threw himself upon him, and during his whole visit, as the historian, Emile Dard, said recently, he tried to become "the great star's impressario."

His meeting with Bonaparte

Bonaparte was willing. In this nobleman gone astray, Bonaparte had discerned a superiority of mind and opinion of which he intended to make use, since there was still much of which he was ignorant in matters of policy. Hardly had he arrived, even before notifying the Directory, when he sent an express message asking for an immediate meeting with Citizen Talleyrand-Périgord.

Talleyrand was delighted with the request, and received the General the next day, December 6, at eleven in the morning. This was the first meeting of the two men who were to collaborate for such a long time and who were finally to face each other in a mortal combat.

"At first," Talleyrand wrote, "Bonaparte seemed to me to have a charming face. Twenty victories go so well with youth, with a fine look, and with a sort of exhaustion. He emphasized the pleasure he had had in corresponding with some one who was different from the directors." It must have been something of this kind that made him find Bonaparte particularly "charming." Talleyrand could not have been far behind in flattery, judging by his letters to the General. They left the room arm in arm. The minister had hastily gathered fifty friends to-

gether. Germaine de Staël had rushed there first of all, and Talleyrand could not keep her from throwing herself before the man of the hour. In the neighboring salon were others, paying homage to the twenty-eight-year-old conqueror and eagerly awaiting a word from him. It was only after this visit to the minister and his friends that he thought of going to greet the Directory.

Five days later, on December 10, he was solemnly received by that body. Next to Bonaparte, Talleyrand was the most conspicuous person present. He went to call for the General on the rue de la Victoire, drove him to the Luxembourg in his carriage, and crossed Paris with him in the midst of cheering crowds. It was he who introduced the hero, and noticing on certain faces "the uneasy suspicion" which must be shown by a "growing republic," he offered assurances that Bonaparte would never be Caesar, that he was Cincinnatus. With what an admirable poker-face, with what make-believe emotion and make-believe conviction did he utter these words which make us laugh today: "Ah! Far from fearing what might be called his ambition, I feel that we shall have to beg him to come away from the sweetness of his studious retreat . . ."

As impassible as the minister but with a shade of gloom, the General seemed little disposed to be eloquent. He was brief; "a brusque, jerky speech," a witness called it. Of his five sentences, the last was like a warning to those in power: "When the happiness of the French people is founded on the best organic laws . . ." It was at this point that Talleyrand leaned towards his neighbor and whispered, "The future is there," as if he had foreseen the happenings of Brumaire, year VIII.

Talleyrand and Egypt

Bonaparte was already thinking of employing Talleyrand for certain negotiations. He had in mind nothing less than an expedition to the Orient under his own command.

He and the minister agreed to the extraordinary plan. Upon his return, the General had received the somewhat fantastic title of commander-in-chief of "the English army." Since breaking off the conferences with Malmesbury, the Directory had talked of going after England, which was becoming its chief enemy. Projected invasions were outlined and Bonaparte was put in charge of studying them. He found them all impractical and said that to persist in this design would lead either to a stalemate or to disaster. Why not attack England far from home by menacing her from the Orient and from the Indies and by establishing oneself in Egypt to assure success?

Talleyrand was the man to encourage such views, because in his

memorandum to the Institute on Messidor 15 on the necessity of creating new "establishments" outside of Europe, he had unhesitatingly named Egypt as the chosen land. He had talked about the matter at some length with the General, and no doubt they agreed to force the consent of the Directory. On Pluviose 8, year VI (January 27, 1798), Talleyrand gave a conclusive report on the conquest of Egypt by the Mamelukes, and in another report of Pluviose 25 (February 15), he put forth certain arguments which others had already presented to the Institute. Turkey, he declared, no longer had any real power in Egypt, and her representative, the pasha of Cairo, was only the slave of the Mameluke beys, the real masters of the country, who were practically separated from the Ottoman Empire. Negotiations would certainly bring the Sultan to give up his rights, or at least to delegate them to France, on the condition that the country be rid of the usurping Mamelukes. This fecund country would not only be a lucrative colony, but also a fine base, being at the point of contact of three parts of the world. The Suez route could be reopened, causing an economic revolution that would greatly harm England. Moreover, since the nations of Europe would sooner or later be obliged to face the loss of their American colonies, France would find no better compensation for her loss than the possession of Egypt. From Egypt it would be possible to threaten the Anglo-Indian empire, by joining with enemies whom Great Britain still had there. Everything, the minister argued, was in favor of the expedition.

He kept back an argument which in his eyes was worth all the others, an idea stemming from his general theory, which was so unusual for his time. The policy of European war and conquest must be ended at any price, and there must be an end to this effort to impose the Rights of Man and of the Citizen upon all of Europe. But the nation was in the habit of going upon these adventures, and must therefore be furnished with more. He revealed his true opinion to Sandoz Rollin, the Prussian minister, when he said that he was counting on the expedition to Egypt "to distract the attention and divert the strength of the Government from these revolutionary ideas which have upset Europe." He revealed himself completely to the representative from Berlin: "The universal Republic is just as much of a chimera as the universal monarchy was." By turning the energy with which the French had fought against the coalition towards the conquest of a new colonial empire, Talleyrand killed two birds with one stone, and by establishing France in Africa, he planned to assure European peace.

When Bonaparte returned from his visit to the Channel coast on February 16, he definitely condemned the idea of leaving immediately.

Long months of preparation were necessary, but while waiting, a blow must be struck against England in the form of a threat to her Indian commerce. He came to see Talleyrand and they joined forces. The minister and the general got permission from the Directory to prepare an expedition at Toulon with Bonaparte in command, once negotiations had begun with the Sublime Porte. The Directory was well disposed towards this project, despite its eccentricity. The minister himself offered to go to Constantinople to conduct the negotiations, and he promised Bonaparte that before he was in sight of Alexandria, he, Talleyrand, would be on the banks of the Bosphorus to pave the diplomatic way for him. Did he ever seriously think of going on such a mission? At any rate, after he had thought things over, he gave up the idea, to the General's lively displeasure. Bonaparte himself was all on fire to go on the expedition, and as far as the uneasy politicians of the Luxembourg were concerned, it was a good way to get rid of this dangerous soldier for a while. He realized that the time was not yet ripe, that his presence in Paris created a false, almost a difficult, situation.

This expedition soon took on much larger proportions in the eyes of all its promoters. When Bonaparte took possession in passing of the Isle of Malta, Talleyrand, a bit intoxicated by this magnificent success, could speak of nothing but "this Mediterranean, which ought to be an exclusively French sea." Thus French policy was no longer focused upon the Rhine and the German powers beyond, whom Talleyrand hoped to pacify, but upon the Orient. Consequently, the "pacifist minister" of a government of "war-mongers" saw the realization of the secret thought which continued to haunt him.

8

A TIMELY DISGRACE

Talleyrand gives up his portfolio

HE LIKED to be known as a pacifist by all of Europe. When the peace of the continent was achieved at Campo-Formio, he confided to a certain foreign minister that he wanted this peace to last long enough to "chill" the military spirit and to awaken "ancient customs." It was at this time that he sent the Directory a report over which we must pause, since it affirms the entire doctrine preached by Talleyrand.

". . . May not one say that the treaty of Campo-Formio and all the other treaties which we have signed are only more or less splendid military capitulations. The quarrel, though assuaged for the moment by the astonishment and the consternation of the conquered, cannot by its very nature be definitely ended by arms, which are uncertain, as long as hate persists. Our enemies consider the treaties which they sign with us only as truces like those which the Mussulmans restricted themselves to making with the enemies of their faith, without ever undertaking engagements for a definitive peace . . . They continue to be our enemies in secret, resting in a state of coalition against us, and we are alone in Europe with five republics which we have created and which are a new source of uneasiness to these powers . . ." When a very serious incident took place on April 13, 1798, at Vienna, where the French flag was torn up and the French minister grossly insulted, the minister used his influence upon the Directory to have the affair managed calmly, as a "great example of moderation." In fact, the incident did not, as had been feared for a moment, set fire to the powder-keg of Europe. Foreigners began to realize that the man was carrying out a truly moderate plan of action: one of them wrote that his membership in the Directory was to be desired, since he "would put an end to the future convulsions of Europe"—which was saying a great deal.

In reality, however, everything upset his plans. He soon convinced himself that Europe had disarmed only for a little while, that she was waiting only for an excuse to start another war to get back all she had

lost. At least, the French government must not furnish the pretext for which the powers were seeking. It was from this point of view precisely that the Directory was traveling a most dangerous route. Under the left-wing pressure of the Councils—strengthened by the elections—the directors were again taking up the role of instigators, aided by political propaganda. It was not enough that Holland, now the Batavian Republic, and Lombardy, the Cisalpine Republic, should be *jacobinized* in order to be more closely incorporated with the Great Republic; it was necessary to create or transform other republics in order to make them satellites of the latter; thus, Switzerland, after a revolution, became a subject country under the name of the Helvetian Republic; thus, when the King of Piedmont was chased from his state, the Genoan Republic, now the Ligurian Republic, was more severely subjugated; and thus, finally, when the Pope and the King of the Two Sicilies were overthrown, the "Roman" and "Parthenopean" Republics were created, forming the southernmost links of the long chain of vassal states, which, from the Zuider Zee to the straits of Messina, protected the frontiers of the French republic. It need hardly be said that, faced with this renewal of revolutionary action, Europe rearmed, and, under the pressure of England, easily formed a new coalition, to which this time Russia brought her new strength.

Talleyrand, who despaired of the political methods of the Directory, did not hide his disapproval. He confided his irritation to one of his colleagues of the Institute: "I maintain that the system which tends to bring liberty to the nations by brute force is the most likely to make it hated and to prevent its triumph." He saw war menacing all the frontiers while the government was tearing itself apart in factional struggles. He foresaw the fall of Barras' government; but he did not intend to go down in the catastrophe; the time had come to abandon ship.

. . . . .

For some time he had been liable to dismissal, and he preferred to forestall it. Only a pretext was wanting to send him packing. It is odd that under such a government, the excuse was found in an affair with a woman. One evening an enchantingly pretty woman had appeared at the minister's salon as a privileged guest, and soon she was installed as mistress of the Foreign Relations mansion itself. Everyone who has been able to see the portrait of the future Princess de Talleyrand, at the Chateau of Valençay, painted at this time by Mme Vigée-Lebrun, will understand the impression aroused by the sight of this ravishing "Indian," Mme Grand, née Catherine Worlée. Called "Indian" because she was born at Pondichery, but in reality the daughter of a Frenchman,

she had married an English agent of the India Company, George Francis Grand; brought to France by one of her lovers after many gallant adventures, her beauty created a sensation in certain salons. Compromised by certain liaisons with aristocrats in 1792, she had prudently gone to England and had remained there during the Reign of Terror; then she had returned to France where the disorder of her life was unnoticed, in the general disorder of morals. Greedy for money, she plotted and schemed in search of a good match. For her, a good match was Maurice de Talleyrand. Suspected of espionage and, consequently, watched by the police, she intended to clear herself with the Minister of Foreign Relations himself, and asked for an audience. She did better than exonerate herself, she imposed herself with the speed of lightning: having entered the minister's study, she did not again leave the mansion, where she was installed from the next day on.

How could someone so refined as this roué, this gentleman who delighted in wit, submit so completely to the charms of this woman whose ignorance, stupidity, and intellectual blankness were soon to be as celebrated as her beauty? It was because this man of wit was, first of all, a sensualist. When he was sixteen years old, the little Abbé de Périgord—with the rosy face of a cherub—was the lover of the little actress, Dorothy Dorinville, despite his priestly cassock; at seventy, the old Prince de Talleyrand, whom everything should have recalled to wisdom, maintained, so everyone said, the most intimate relations with his young niece, Dorothy de Courlande, Duchess de Dino! Between these two Dorothys of 1772 and 1814 how many women were written on his list? But, since from 1772 to 1798, he had known the society of so many great, noble, and witty ladies, how can one explain how this adventuress of limited intelligence got such control over him, though for only a few years, that she seemed to be the one chosen above all others and, covering him with shame, made him marry her. "Beauty and the beast at one and the same time," wrote the terrible Frenilly; but she was the "beauty," and, if one is to believe certain witnesses, although she was "simple," she was still more the "beauty than the beast."

"Your wife, it seems, is not too stupid!" the First Consul, with his usual rudeness, said to Talleyrand one day, and the latter, always ready with a quick answer, replied, "Heavens! She has the wit of a rose!" She was sweet, even-tempered, good-natured, without any morality or any scruples, devoted to her love affairs. After all, in such circumstances, even her legendary stupidity may have been of use to her. A cruel saying has been credited to Talleyrand: "One must have been the lover of Mme de Staël to know the pleasure one has in marrying a

beast." If this saying is his, it perhaps explains why Catherine Grand was the chosen one.

But it was quickly known that this "creature" was installed as lady of the house in the minister's mansion. Talleyrand had enemies; consequently, his protection exposed Catherine more than it guarded her; the police were disturbed: Catherine was arrested. Talleyrand instantly took up his pen: "Citizen director," he wrote to Barras, "Mme Grand has just been arrested as a conspirator. She is the one person in the world the farthest from and the most incapable of mixing herself in any intrigue; she's a very beautiful, very lazy Indian, the most idle of all the women I have ever met. I ask you to use your influence on her behalf. I am sure that not a shadow of an excuse will be found for not ending this little affair, about which I am sorry there is such a stir. I love her and I swear to you, as man to man, that never in her life has she mixed in any intrigue or been capable of doing so."

The woman was cleared, but only after a meeting of the Directory which left Talleyrand humiliated by rough handling and loss of prestige. The pamphleteers who were set loose against him now had this new complaint to add to the many others. The Ministry on the Rue du Bac which had already been called a "den," now became a "bawdy house," and the stolen millions were going to "prostitutes." One of those surprising moral crusades which often have nothing to do with morality, was going on at the time, but since the entire personnel of the Directory had been denounced as immoral and dishonest, some of its members, for the sake of their own security, were not unwilling to toss a few heads to the virtuous moralists from time to time.

. . . . .

Talleyrand had been irksome to the Directory for weeks. The new coalition in the war provoked by the government's errors was this time victorious from Germany to Italy. Talleyrand had the right to say, "I told you so," but often to be right is the worst of wrongs. Still popular opinion (which is easy enough to form) blamed the Minister of Foreign Relations for these reverses, and naturally the Directory would not back up this man whose very presence at its conferences seemed like a living reproach. "Our Minister of Foreign Relations is an Anglo-*émigré* . . . Talleyrand is a traitor . . . Talleyrand is the assassin of his country." So read *The Free Men's Journal,* an organ of the extreme left.

Talleyrand knew that he was poorly defended, cast off, even betrayed by the Directory. In these few months, however, he had already enriched himself and could return to private life for a while with no in-

convenience. It would not be for long, he felt. The government was on its last legs and it would be better to leave it before it perished. The minister had twice offered his resignation and had twice been refused. On Thermidor 2 (July 20, 1798), he sent another letter of resignation to the Directory. "I feel," he wrote, "that my name alone, attacked as it is every day by new outrages, could become an obstacle to the views of the government." This time the resignation was accepted. Even though he seemed to be leaving of his own choice and to have had the privilege of picking out his successor, his friend Reinhard, he posed as a sacrificed man. He left, still preaching boldly: "The chief cause, which is incessantly agitating and whose effects cannot be hidden, is the fear which the Revolution inspires in all the old governments of Europe." This fear had to be calmed, but, against his advice, it had been nourished and even more aroused. When a new government was installed, he would be the one to reconcile France with Europe. The time was at hand, and Reinhard himself, devoted to Talleyrand, knew well that he was enjoying only a short stay on the Rue du Bac.

Brumaire

From the moment that Bonaparte disembarked at Fréjus and began his march towards Paris, the former minister began to work for a revolution that would overthrow the Directory and put the General in power. Bonaparte arrived in Paris on the evening of Vendémiaire 24 (October 16) and Talleyrand was one of his first visitors the next morning. He was welcomed with open arms. He was a valuable helper in every respect, although he no longer belonged to the Government and was consequently less able than Fouché, now Minister of Police, to throw open the gates; but what information he kept from his days in office! It was on the basis of such information that Bonaparte intended to act, preferring to have the Directory abdicate in his favor than brutally to overthrow a failing government.

Only two men, Barras and Sieyès, counted in this government, and Talleyrand had remained on good terms with both of them since his departure from the ministry. He was given the task of blindfolding Barras and winning over Sieyès.

Barras knew better than anyone that the Directory was near its end. He was treating with the Pretender from whom he had obtained some very attractive promises. Talleyrand came to give him some excellent news on Vendémiaire 25 (October 17); Bonaparte was seeking only the reinforcement of authority by means of a centralization of powers. His personal ambition was simply to be commander-in-chief of the

armies. As for the Republic, there would no longer be five heads, but one, a "president," who would be Barras, for whom the General still felt great friendship. Was the director their dupe? He was tired, and if he was deceived for the moment, he could not long remain so. When Talleyrand came to see him three weeks later on Brumaire 15, accompanied by Fouché, now won over to the conspiracy, and by Joseph Bonaparte, there was still the question of a president, but Barras was not involved.

Sieyès also had been won over. For the five months that he had been a director, he had thought only of putting an end to the regime which had been established in Year III. He was all ready with his constitution of a perfect government, which he had been holding in reserve since 1792. But Sieyès felt no sympathy for Bonaparte, for the strong personality of the ex-proconsul of Italy filled him with real distrust. Bonaparte, on the other hand, thought that Sieyès was too speculative, a political dreamer, and he hesitated to approach him. Talleyrand, the least speculative of political minds, surely must have agreed with Bonaparte about Sieyès' plans, but he thought that the man was necessary to the execution of the great project. At least three out of the five directors had to resign their jobs. Since Sieyès counted for two because his understudy, Roger Ducos, came along with him, only a third had to be found. The ex-minister planned to throw Sieyès into Bonaparte's arms. He brought the two men together, and it was on his advice that Bonaparte coaxed this Solon. "We have no constitution," he said, "at least not the one we need; it's up to your genius to give us one." Talleyrand, who was present at the meeting, must have thought that he had an excellent pupil in Bonaparte. Sieyès thought that the General was an intelligent man with whom one could reach an understanding.

Talleyrand knew hardly a moment's rest during these three weeks of preparation, and it was not surprising when he was summoned to Bonaparte at dawn on the eighteenth of Brumaire. There he was given a mission which he himself had inspired. While Bonaparte went to the Tuileries, where the Council of Ancients delegated to him the command of the troops and the charge of saving the state, Sieyès and Ducos resigned, and Talleyrand went with Admiral Bruix to ask Barras to follow their example. They found him in a state of great discouragement, worn out by years of playing the political game, and almost without resistance. Talleyrand had prepared a fine letter of resignation, designed to appeal to the self-love of the man who was to sign it. If Barras hesitated, Talleyrand was authorized by Ouvrard to give him a letter of exchange worth several millions, but Barras, after looking out into

the street where the crowds were cheering Bonaparte, decided to sign with no more ado. Talleyrand embraced and thanked him, and, it is said, made off with the letter of exchange which no one ever saw again. If this story is true, and everything about Talleyrand and money is believable, it seems that the man never missed a single opportunity. At any rate, his mission was over; the resignation of Barras, following those of Sieyès and Roger Ducos, put an end to the Directory.

Talleyrand's role ended at that point, for it was not as an actor but as a vitally interested spectator that he went to Saint-Cloud the next day to see the last act of the drama. Talleyrand was really admirable during these great days. He was interested in every sense of the word, for the success of the enterprise would mean the realization of his "immense fortune" to a much greater degree than when he first became minister. What were the few paltry millions gained under Barras compared to what the future held in store? The government that was being created, he thought, was the only one which could give him back his portfolio and open the path to glory.

His return to the Ministry

Faithful to his plan, Bonaparte intended to have his revolution resemble an overthrow as little as possible. As his colleagues in the provisory Consulate, he had taken two of the former directors, Sieyès and Roger Ducos. He had decided to keep the majority of the ministers of the Directory, and for a moment, since Reinhard, along with Cambacérès and Fouché, kept his portfolio, Talleyrand seemed to have played the dupe. But three days later, at a gathering of some of his helpers, Bonaparte took care not to forget him, and while he dismissed the others, he took Talleyrand by the arm and begged him simply to wait. He did not have to wait long. Reinhard was named minister to Switzerland on Brumaire 30, and the next day a decree dated Frimaire 1 recalled "Citizen Talleyrand-Périgord" to the Ministry of Foreign Relations. A journal, *The Friend of the Law,* wrote in his praise: "He would have made peace long ago if he had not had to surmount obstacles put in his way by foreign powers. But how could he triumph over the absurd policy and the extravagant ambition of the majority of the former directors, who did all that they could to eternalize war by bringing revolution to every country we could enter?"

This résumé of the situation in which Talleyrand found himself during his time in office is so much like what he wanted everyone to believe that it must have been written under his inspiration. What Bonaparte thought is more interesting: "He has what is needed in the

negotiations, worldliness, familiarity with the courts of Europe, cleverness that keeps him from saying too much, facial immobility which nothing can change, and finally, a great name. I know that he belongs to the Revolution only through misconduct: as a Jacobin and deserter from his class at the Constitutional Assembly, his interests will answer for him."

PART TWO

NAPOLEON'S MINISTER
1800-1807

9

BONAPARTE AND TALLEYRAND

His reinstallation in the Ministry

FIRST OF ALL, Talleyrand intended to make his action independent of those whom he haughtily called "subalterns." He had had to suffer a great deal by working under Barras, Reubell, La Reveillière, and François de Neufchâteau. Working under Bonaparte would be a relief if he had to deal with Bonaparte alone. The government was in the hands of three consuls, but Talleyrand never concealed his aristocratic disdain for Lebrun and Cambacérès, little lawyers to whom "one used to pay a louis for a consultation." *"Hic, haec, hoc,"* he scoffed, meaning that the masculine referred to Bonaparte, the feminine to Cambacérès, the neuter to the prudent Lebrun, whose attitude justified such mockery. Despite the degrading influences to which he had submitted, he was still a Périgord. "God only" was the motto of his house, and if he had to serve any master besides God, he had to be of the highest. He also knew well how to flatter Bonaparte in order to realize his own wishes. Talleyrand proposed that his two colleagues, *"Haec* and *Hoc,"* be left alone to amuse themselves, Cambacérès with the control of Justice and Lebrun, of Finance, and that Bonaparte take charge of everything which pertained directly to state policy: Interior, Police, War, Navy, and, oddly enough, Foreign Relations. The man who held the portfolio of Foreign Relations could collaborate usefully only with the real head of the government. He thought that the offer would be accepted, as indeed it was. "From the very first day," he wrote, "it was decided that I should work only with the First Consul."

He still had to come to a clear understanding with this master, who plainly was not going to be a mere figurehead and who would make his will felt. Even when he was subordinate to the Directory, Bonaparte had shown that he knew how to get his own way, not only by his conduct from Leoben to Campo-Formio, but also by his forcing the Directory to allow the expedition to Egypt. He had his own opinions, and perhaps they might not coincide with the "principles" which Tal-

leyrand had tried to establish in opposition to the Directory's "passion for conquests."

The policy of moderation

Talleyrand was really always faithful to this policy. "This man who took forty oaths and who was the chief ornament of *The Dictionary of Weathercocks,*" writes Emile Dard, "had a perfectly unified outlook, despite his apparent variations." He was very French in his inclination towards moderation. "Everything exaggerated is insignificant," he once said, meaning that excess destroys soundness. So thought most of the statesmen of the *Ancien Régime,* for whom French policy always meant patient execution rather than rapid realization. From 1792 on he had been hostile to the "war of propaganda" which had coalized all of Europe against France, and in his memorandum of November 25, 1792, he had warned Danton and his colleagues of the Executive Council against "expansionism." "Real primacy, the only useful and reasonable kind, the only kind befitting free and enlightened men," he wrote, "is to be master at home, and not to have the ridiculous pretension of ruling over others." He had hardly been listened to, and, during those months of madness, hardly understood. The Revolution had not been content with the unexpected victories though they brought about the completion of French territory which the statesmen of the *Ancien Régime* only dreamed of after years and even centuries of work. In 1792, in three short months and at one blow, all the natural boundaries had been conquered. The Rhine had been crossed and French armies were on the Alps as well as the Pyrenees. But Talleyrand, belonging to the tradition of the ministers of the Valois and the Bourbons, could regard these too sudden gains only with apprehension.

Now that the new coalition had resulted in the expulsion of the French from Italy and in a threatened invasion of the "natural boundaries," could not one learn from this lesson and follow the path of wisdom, that is, of moderation? A few days after his return to the ministry, he tried to reassure Europe through the representative of the only great power with whom relations had not been broken off. "There is no longer any question of upsetting everything for the sake of a few sophistries," he told the Prussian minister. "We shall try to inspire confidence by religiously respecting the rights of other governments."

Two policies

Did he really think that he could prevail upon Bonaparte to adopt such a policy? Perhaps. It must be remembered that Bonaparte had

then just come into power, and was very different from the man he became when unprecedented fortune overstimulated his pride and ambition as well as his genius and, in a sense, imposed upon him this immoderation which was so repugnant to Talleyrand.

During the first two years of the Consulate, Talleyrand had some reason to hope that the new leader of France would be able to resist the temptations and the solicitations to which he later yielded. Probably the minister was so close to the "fortunate soldier" that he soon had many doubts and then fears on this score. When in the summer of 1800 the conqueror of Marengo brought back new laurels from Italy, the minister said to Ouvrard, "I know what the First Consul ought to do, what his interests demand, and that is the peace of France and of Europe. Two paths are open to him: the federal system which leaves each conquered prince master of his own territory under conditions favorable to the victor; for example, the First Consul could re-establish in this way the King of Sardinia, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, etc. . . . But on the other hand, will he wish to unite and incorporate everything? Then he will be choosing a career that has no end."

Talleyrand had to give up his principles and ideas for the sake of a policy which was in opposition to all of his opinions as well as his inclinations. Ambition and cupidity caused him to remain in the service of this policy. He excused himself by saying that he was a counselor who was always consulted, if not heeded, and that, moreover, as interpreter of the wishes of the master and as the intermediary between him and Europe, he still had a chance, however slight, of tempering or at least directing his policy.

The alliance with Austria

From the later statesmen of the *Ancien Régime* he had inherited an idea which always guided him, the same idea which led Choiseul to "upset the alliances" and to which the ministers after Choiseul were faithful: an *entente* with the ancient "hereditary enemy," Austria. Prussia was growing into a threat to all countries. For the time being, Prussia was a menace only to Austria, from whom she was eventually to seize control of Germany. But at some more or less distant date, she would be a real danger to France, since the still young and warlike Prussian monarchy could, by taking control of Germany away from worn-out Austria, vivify that great Germanic aggregation and thus annihilate the security which Richelieu had built for France. Talleyrand, the disciple of Choiseul, did not like Prussia, and he was perhaps the

only man of the Revolution who felt nothing but antipathy and distrust towards her.

The minister wanted a return to Choiseul's policy and always sought to have conquered Austria handled with care. While it was true that she had been driven out of Italy, still Italy must not be turned into an annex of France, for Austria would never be resigned to the substitution of French suzerainty and domination for her own. For this reason, Talleyrand was always hostile to the complete subordination of the Italian states to the French Republic, and then to the French Empire. Driven out of Italy, Austria would turn towards Germany, and would try to regain control of the Holy Roman Empire, an attempt that would lead her to oppose the growth of Prussia. Austria could do another and a better service: she could stop Russia in the Orient. Russia was Talleyrand's second *bête noir,* and he felt towards the Russians the horror that a civilized man of refinement feels towards a "nation of barbarians." These barbarians were menacing the Ottoman Empire. Ever since the days of Francis I, France had counted on the support of the Sublime Porte in the Mediterranean, and Catherine the Great's project to ruin the Ottoman Empire could hardly be agreeable to France. But Austria alone could impede the march of the Russians towards Constantinople. An alliance with Vienna would thus serve two ends: the restraining of Prussia in the North, of Russia in the Orient.

Relations with England

Talleyrand felt a "sympathy" for England which his expulsion in January, 1794 had not discouraged. Like so many other men of his time, this "enlightened" gentleman had fallen under the spell of the famous "English Constitution." He saw it as the model of a representative government still full of an aristocratic spirit, an arrangement most pleasing to this aristocrat who so disdained the rabble and even the people. London society pleased him, for he found in it that distinction combined with humor which so charmed his own witty spirit. He enjoyed all the ramifications of that "education" which he no longer found in the leading men of France. Consequently, he felt a constant sympathy for England, whose representatives he always received with special affability, whose hostility he tried to vanquish under the Empire, and whose good will he especially cultivated under the Restoration. In his old age, after thirty-eight years, he finally realized this *entente cordiale,* which he had recommended in 1792 and which he had never ceased to desire, since it was "the pivot for the balance of the world."

What we know about his mission to London is proof of the concern

which England's entry into the coalition must have caused him. If he did not join in the negotiations at Amiens in 1801 which seemed to effect a reconciliation, he was present in spirit. No one tried more tenaciously to mend the rupture of 1803, and when new negotiations were begun in 1806, he did everything to give the impression that, being about to leave the ministry, "he would make it a point of honor first to reach the conclusion of peace with England." When the Emperor fell in 1814, it was to England that Talleyrand turned for support of his international policy, even to the point of making many sacrifices to English demands, and at the drawing up of the Treaty of Vienna in 1814–1815, it was upon the help of England and Austria that he tried to base his resistance to the claims of Russia and Prussia. In a general fashion it may be said that it was at the Congress of Vienna that he realized at last, in the treaty of January 3, 1815, with England and Austria against Prussia and Russia, the dream which he had had from 1792 to 1814. During those twelve years he may have seemed to take part in the deception, may have seemed to support his master's actions, even when they were most opposed to his own policy, as when he wrote in the most severe fashion to the British cabinet in 1803 and to the Austrian chancellery in 1807, may have seemed for a moment to entertain the idea of an *entente* with Prussia or of an alliance with Russia, may have seemed resigned to the hegemonical policy which led Napoleon on and on in his "career that has no end," may have seemed to sacrifice his personal principles and opinions to the great man's dreams, but he never really forgot them and bore a grudge against Napoleon for having forced the sacrifice. Under the guise of submissiveness, he remained faithful to his ideas and determined to see them prevail some day by secretly preparing the downfall of the man who had forced him to postpone their realization. This silent struggle was the drama which, as a part of the great tragedy which was played from 1800 to 1815, was the chief interest of Talleyrand's life. This drama would be unintelligible without some understanding of the origin of the conflict which played such a great role in the history of the Empire.

Talleyrand and Bonaparte

Because Talleyrand apparently always yielded, meekly put his signature to treaties of which he heartily disapproved, and consequently seemed to serve the Emperor's hegemonical policy, one might well conclude that he played a small role and that in reality this "great minister" was just a docile employee and nothing more. "He signed events, he did not make them happen," wrote Chateaubriand.

Why, then, did the master to whom he was really antipathetic, keep him for such a long time, and after he had parted from him, why did he so often regret it? The reason is that Talleyrand was more useful to this master than one realizes.

In the first place, he brought his knowledge of European and French affairs before 1789 to the service of the young officer, whose own knowledge of such matters was no more than what he had read, and who was aware of the fact. Next, he contributed a certain manner, a mixture of natural haughtiness and equally natural craftiness, of arrogance and of intelligence, of belief in traditions and of easiness in their application which made him liked, admired, and feared by all the foreign diplomats. Finally, he so organized the ministry that it became what Napoleon valued most, "an excellent working tool."

"I know all that you do not know, but you know all that I do not know," Bonaparte once said to his minister. The First Consul valued him as a top-notch informer. He knew that the ex-Bishop of Autun was especially well informed about ecclesiastical affairs before 1789, about the principles of the Gallic church and its relations with the Holy See, but he especially valued him for his knowledge of foreign affairs. Until he considered himself an initiate in international matters, he loved to consult this man who "knew the precedents," and who "knew the country," had visited London and America, and who through his relations with foreigners, had direct and constant contact with the world. He enjoyed his conversation more than that of anyone else. Bonaparte was more aristocratic than has been realized, for although he generally affected the rude, almost gross manner of the Revolutionary soldier, still he appreciated delicacy of language, subtle statements, and a mind refined by education. Of all those who surrounded him, only Talleyrand represented "the style of Versailles."

"He is the only man that I can talk to," said Napoleon. Even when he did not intend to follow his advice, he asked for it, and even when he had resolved not to agree with his ideas, he liked to know what they were because they made him think. While he often seemed to ignore his counsel, he paid more attention than has been known. Sometimes he even paid too much attention, as at the beginning of the affair with Spain. At any rate, he especially enjoyed picking Talleyrand's brains, and profited greatly by it.

He prized the "manner" in which the man represented and interpreted him. When written or spoken by Talleyrand, the most severe ultimata lost their offensive harshness but not their impressive force. Talleyrand always knew the formulas that softened but did not sweeten

the master's wishes. His relations with foreign diplomats were managed with that haughty ease which had been his since birth. Metternich, who came to France in 1805, was very proud of his high birth, but found his master in the minister of the Empire born of Democracy. "Talleyrand," he wrote, "was proud as all the Périgords were."

Napoleon was, indeed, grateful to Talleyrand for making the ministry such an efficient tool. The minister set his own mark upon this instrument with the words, "No zeal." He meant that nothing is more dangerous than to go beyond the master's wishes or to serve them too quickly. When Talleyrand presented the higher personnel of his ministry to his successor, Nompère de Champagny, in 1807, he said, "You will find them faithful, clever, exact, but thanks to my care, not at all zealous." The new minister was startled, especially when he added with his poker-faced gravity, "Everyone here is unaccustomed to eagerness. When you have spent some time on European affairs with the Emperor, Monsieur, you will see how important it is not to be in a hurry to expedite and to put the official seal on his wishes." He once said to a friend, "The Emperor, who was a man of action, was always thankful that I delayed execution, because it gave him the time to abandon resolutions which he had made too quickly." Napoleon himself confirmed this statement, for he once wrote to Champagny, who had probably been too "zealous," "You ought always to keep my letters under your pillow for three or four days before sending them out." The master was certainly obliged to Talleyrand for having given him such a prudent rule of conduct.

It was because of such practices that the man always seemed valuable to Napoleon. When they had fallen out, he often sighed, "Ah! If I had Talleyrand!" In 1800, he "had him" for seven years, and in Nivose, year VIII, Talleyrand, still thinking that he would win the genial soldier over to his own policy, trusted him a great deal, thinking only of helping him on his way towards an increasingly greater power.

10

THE CONSULATE: THE AFFAIR OF THE CONCORDAT

The first months of the Consulate

"IF HE LASTS a year, he will go far," said Talleyrand to Hyde de Neuville in the winter of year VIII, for he was somewhat uneasy. In reality, the power of the First Consul was most precarious, and while his advent had certainly pleased the masses, on the other hand, it had vexed so many of the higher-ups that they were bound to react in one way or another. To the plots of the royalists were added the intrigues of the parties which had been formed during the revolutionary crisis. The Assemblies, which Sieyès had peopled with malcontents, were resisting; the great soldiers were biding their time; and even in the government, where each minister had his own "policy," the First Consul was followed with some hesitation.

Talleyrand longed for the time when the man would be strengthened in his position, since for him as well as for so many others who worked for and benefited by the Revolution, Napoleon was the only security.

The ex-bishop had never considered the Republic as anything but an irksome expedient, and he was still a monarchist to the core. But was it possible even to think of restoring the Bourbon throne? Too many interests would be at stake, too many lives in danger, powerful interests and prominent lives. There was a whole world of people, ranging from the purchasers of national property to the still influential group of regicides, who stood in the way of the return of the brother of Louis XVI and of the *émigrés,* who would long for revenge. Talleyrand was neither a purchaser nor a regicide, but he was still severely compromised, for he was, as Etienne Lamy wrote, "the man whom the royalty treated as a rebel, the nobility as a turncoat, and the Church as an apostate." The Bourbons had made no secret of their feelings and intentions towards him. When Louis XVIII and his circle sent La Tour du Pin and others as emissaries to Paris, the latter, who had some regard for

Talleyrand, asked Conzié, the Bishop of Arras and the King's minister in exile, "And what would you do with M. de Talleyrand?" With what he clearly intended as condescension, and unusual liberality, and magnanimity, Conzié replied, "You may tell him that if we return to France, he certainly cannot stay, but I guarantee him safe-conduct to go live in any foreign country that most pleases him." La Tour du Pin certainly did not keep Talleyrand in the dark about this remarkable answer. Louis XVIII cherished a strong antipathy for him—"the hatred of an illustrious house," as the Pretender wrote to Cardinal Maury on April 21, 1800.

While he was not familiar with this letter to Maury, Talleyrand well knew the "King's" feelings towards him. When the Abbé de Montesquiou came to Paris six months later in a final effort to convince Bonaparte that he should be the restorer of the Throne of Lilies, Talleyrand saw him, listened to him, did not resist, even praised Louis XVIII, but declared that he ought to give up hope. Once he had been warned, Bonaparte's minister was determined not simply to oppose any possible return of the Bourbons (without revealing himself, of course) but to put an abyss between them and Bonaparte. The affair of the Duke d'Enghien was the outcome of this resolution.

Despite this rejection of the Bourbons, he was still a monarchist. No one had a quicker or more ardent desire than he to set the young soldier upon a restored throne. While everyone was conspiring and plotting when Bonaparte left for Italy in May, 1800, Talleyrand, not wishing to be incautious, was also preparing himself in case of the young leader's death or defeat. "Your friend from Auteuil (i.e., Talleyrand) is the soul of everything," wrote Lucien to Joseph on June 24. That is saying a great deal, but it is certain that he, like Fouché, took such precautions as the creation of a party in the Senate, and, moreover, his intrigues never once aimed at overthrowing the consular government. He was quite sincere when he expressed his joy and enthusiasm after Marengo: "Will posterity be able to believe in the prodigies of this campaign! Under what auspices your return is promised to us! There has never been an empire that was not founded on the marvelous, and here the marvelous is the truth."

This enthusiasm, I repeat, was sincere. Marengo put an end to the dangers, if not the difficulties, with which the new power had to struggle, for victory consecrated it, and from then on, Talleyrand resolved not merely to attach himself to it, but to fortify and exalt it. "My devotion," he wrote to the master, "will end only with my life." During these early days, his protestations of friendship, almost of love, were by no

means pretended, and even though they were couched in terms of the most refined flattery, they were still true. If he was uneasy about the First Consul's health, he still wrote in a flattering but nevertheless sincere style: "I do not like your library; you spend too much time there. The ground floor is worth nothing to you; you are made for the heights." And he was still sincere a few months later when he gave himself up body and soul: "Allow me to borrow from the history of a celebrated friendship what Henry IV's minister said to his master, 'Since I am bound up in your fate, I belong to you in life as well as death!' "

He was logical as well as sincere in making every effort to push this young man towards supreme power. There were two opposing groups about the Consul; one wanted him to be content with the limited republican magistracy which had been conferred upon him for ten years by the plebiscite of year VIII; but the other sought for him not only a lifelong Consulship but a dictatorship as well, which would promptly set him upon a restored throne. In the first two years of the Consulate, Fouché was the leader of the first party, Talleyrand of the second. Since the latter found himself in opposition to the old Jacobins, he fought against them with all his power, and, having established friendly relations with his colleague of the Ministry of Police, he did everything he could to get them out of the way. When the Consul's life was endangered because of an assault in Nivos by certain royalist plotters, it was Talleyrand who, contrary to Fouché's advice and for the sake of upsetting him, attributed the crime "to the men who played a more or less dominant role in the horrors of the Revolution," and even when Fouché had been proved right, Talleyrand still used the assault as an argument in favor of increasing the Consul's power.

To balance the influence of the ex-revolutionaries, he appealed to the counter-revolutionaries. Incredible as it may seem, this man who had been so cursed for betraying his class was already gathering about him those representatives of his former life who had remained in or returned to Paris. Such a fact seems incredible, however, only to those who do not know how little previous happenings count in politics, and especially how ten eventful years in a revolutionary era seem like a century. "Citizen Talleyrand-Périgord" had hardly been installed in office by the First Consul when he invited fifty of his former associates, who were not "citizens" at all, to his salon, and found that most of them answered his call. Two months after his return to public life, in a villa he had acquired in Neuilly, he held a gathering on Ventose 6 of the "two worlds," which until then had been separated by so many frightful memories. Besides the revolutionaries who surrounded the First

Consul and who formed his government, there appeared the Chevalier de Coigny, an old friend of Louis XV, the Ségurs, the La Rochefoucauld-Liancourts, the Crillons, the Jaucourts, and some twenty noble ladies, Mmes Vergennes, Castellane, Noailles, Aiguillon, Caumont, and others. They offered the excuse that since at Neuilly they were really at M. de Talleyrand's, they were not really giving their approval of the government, but within a year this brilliant society was accepting invitations to the salons of the Ministry itself. Talleyrand was almost glorified in the eyes of the First Consul. On Ventose 28, he sent the head of the "republican" government a list of the people who had been present at the Ministry of Foreign Relations, among whom were: "Mesdames d'Aiguillon, Benezech, Bourgoign, Canteleu, Castellane (née Charost), Bruix, Crillon (famille de), Custine, de Dreux (Brézé), du Clusel, de Flahaut, de Fleurieu, de Jaucourt, de Jumilhac, de Lameth, de La Rochefoucauld (née Rohan-Chabot), de Noailles, Reichstrein, de Ségur, de Vaisuel, de Vergennes, de Witt (née Lepelletier-Saint-Farjeau)." This note is like an announcement of victory, and Talleyrand had good reason to emphasize these "reconquests" to the chief of state, since "reconciliation," which was later to become "fusion," had been one of his first aims. Before two years were out, they appeared at the consular court, and before four, they peopled the imperial court with their brothers and friends. The First Consul had hoped for this since the year VIII, and was not only grateful to his minister for acting as a link with the "Faubourg Saint-Germain," but also had further reason to esteem him as a valuable servitor.

Talleyrand might have been satisfying his vanity in summoning his former associates, but he really hoped that the men, noble or not, whose principles had been opposed to the Revolution would rally to the government and increase the counter-revolutionary party. This party, when detached from the Bourbons, would reinforce the group that was planning to react against the Jacobin spirit in all spheres and to work for the establishment of a new throne. While seeming to busy himself exclusively with foreign affairs, Talleyrand was preaching the reconstruction of what had been destroyed, while surrounding himself with guarantees of safety. He well knew that leading the First Consul along this path would bring them into closer and closer agreement.

The affair of the Concordat

He surrounded himself with guarantees of safety because, while serving a policy that squared with his ideas, he was careful not to neglect his own interests and fears. This fact explains his attitude in the

matter of "re-establishing the altars" and in the conclusion of the Concordat.

"When Napoleon re-established religious worship in France in 1801," Prince de Talleyrand wrote in his *Memoirs,* "it was not only an act of justice, but also of great wisdom." On another page, he wrote, "The Napoleon of the Concordat is the truly great and enlightened Napoleon, guided by his genius." This *satisfecit,* decreed from above, would have stupefied those who knew about all the pitfalls which Citizen Talleyrand-Périgord had placed in the way of the Roman negotiators. "In general, Talleyrand always showed himself most unwilling to see the re-establishment of the Catholic religion in France," wrote the Count von Coblenz, the Austrian ambassador, when the negotiations were over, "which is easily explicable because of the embarrassment he must have felt on account of his former position as bishop." One day, during the course of these difficult parleys, Caselli, a representative of the Holy See, wrote in despair, "We have many enemies, but above all we have an implacable and all-powerful one in Autun." As far as the Church was concerned, Talleyrand was still "Autun," an apostate bishop, but *"sacerdos in aeternum."*

Was he hostile to the conclusion of a Concordat on principle? Certainly not. Since he "made a powerful contribution to the great reconciliation with the Church," as he boast in his *Memoirs,* all these stories must be ignored if one is to believe him.

"Let there be a reconciliation," he said in 1801, but he wanted the Church to bear the burden of it. Concerning the recall of the *émigrés,* a project to which he had shown himself favorable, he wrote, "Those whom the Revolution pardons must pardon the Revolution in their turn." In general, he intended the Concordat to be not a gesture of "reparation" to Rome on the part of France, but a gesture of "settlement," and far from any "going to Canossa," the Pope and the Curia were obliged to come to him. Above all, he intended to turn the matter to his personal advantage, not only by the regularization of his situation as an unfrocked priest, but also by the justification of all his past conduct in the nationalization of ecclesiastical property and in the establishment of the constitutional church. To obtain these advantages, he first had to be the "implacable and all-powerful enemy" that Caselli thought he was.

At the beginning of the negotiations, he really seemed disinterested. He saw that the Consul was passionately eager for a prompt understanding, and realized that to show a systematic hostility from the start (which was not his intention, moreover) would arouse Bonaparte's

distrust. It was impossible for him not to see that "Autun," as a traitor to the Church, could feel only apprehension at the re-establishment of the altars and of ecclesiastical discipline. Always anxious to establish law and order, Bonaparte seemed to expect a very strange solution from his Minister of Foreign Relations: his return to the Church with some eminent title. At the very beginning, he proposed to have the Holy See grant his minister full amnesty, and the cardinal's cap which so many of the King's ministers had worn. Perhaps he saw a great advantage in this combination, for he knew that Talleyrand was about to yield to the insistence of his mistress, Catherine Grand, by making her his wife, a marriage which, so the Consul said, would "dishonor the ministry and go scandalously against the 'order'" which he wanted to establish in society. Napoleon made Mme Grand's dismissal the price of this return to grace and of the granting of the cardinal's cap. Such a solution was probably far from Talleyrand's thoughts. He wanted above all to be secularized by Rome in order to facilitate his marriage with the pretty woman who held him under her thumb, and the idea of putting on the red hat seemed like too much of a joke to him. He tried to dissuade the Consul from making such a proposal to Rome, saying that it would be rejected, anyway, and that he would spare the Pope the embarrassment of having to refuse.

With these motives, Talleyrand let the plenipotentiaries conduct the negotiations with no dilly-dallying. Bonaparte pushed them on. When the representatives of Rome, not without difficulty, agreed to the considerable concession of making a *tabula rasa* of the whole of the former episcopacy, when they said that they would ignore the nationalization and alienation of the Church properties, and when they finally consented to grant the Republic the right of episcopal nomination which had formerly belonged to the Most Christian King, the First Consul was also ready to yield on a few points, especially on the recognition of Catholicism as the state religion. It seemed as if the Concordat were about to be signed and as if everything were over.

It was at this point that Talleyrand stepped in. Nothing had been said about saving the constitutional church from the opprobrium of pure and simple suppression, nor about the fate of its unfrocked and married priests who would be condemned to a most irregular life. In his heart, Talleyrand was thinking only of himself and of a certain interesting clause, that which would readmit to "lay communion" those priests who had abandoned the Church and who had been or were about to be married. Cardinal Mathieu, the historian of the Concordat, calls this "Madame Grand's clause."

Naturally the ex-Bishop of Autun said nothing about this matter which preoccupied him. The projected accord had hardly been submitted to Bonaparte for approval, however, when Talleyrand put forth an objection to one of the most important and most general matters, and threw everything open to question again. To declare Catholicism the state religion, he pointed out, was to deny the spirit of the Revolution, since one of its essential principles, one which the Consulate had declared especially untouchable, was the equality of all religions. If Rome wanted homage paid to the primacy of the Catholic religion, it would be sufficient to recognize it as the "religion of the majority." Talleyrand easily swayed the Consul on this point, and being thus authorized to give his opinion on the whole project, he had his master add an adjunction which seemed benign and which, if accepted, would remove from him one of the worst blemishes he still had in the eyes of faithful Catholics. An article was introduced to the effect that the constitutional bishops, like the bishops of the *Ancien Régime,* would be "exhorted by the Pope to resign their seats." This was a trap for the Curia, which had never admitted the validity of the constitutional elections nor the legitimacy of the prelates chosen, for this article would not only satisfy these prelates, but would also give a quasi-absolution to Talleyrand, who had dared to consecrate these "intruders" in 1790 and had thus founded the schismatic church, whose existence Rome was now called upon to recognize retrospectively.

The Consul accepted this perfidious suggestion, thinking that the article conformed to the very spirit of a "concordat," which, he said, ought not to be "a victory for either side." He seemed not to notice the element of personal interest, and with this encouragement, Talleyrand slipped in the famous clause about the married priests, which turned the proposal into something that could wreck the accord.

The representatives of Rome flatly refused to discuss the matter, and the negotiations seemed endangered. One of them, Spinra, referred the matter to Rome, and the Curia rejected all the new proposals. In annoyance, Bonaparte decided to recall Cacault, the recently accredited Minister to the Vatican. As Minister of Foreign Relations, Talleyrand addressed a severe letter to Cacault which allowed him no possibility for any evasions. He had to quit Rome, and in taking leave of the Pope, to announce that relations were to be broken off.

Before he left, however, Cacault convinced Consalvi, the secretary of state, to come to Paris himself to try to patch things up, a mission to which Pius VII gave consent. He was just in time, for Talleyrand's second letter to Cacault, more bitter than the first, was full of threats.

He spoke in the name of the First Consul, but wrote with a virulence unheard of in the minister and quite unlike Bonaparte's spirit. Bonaparte, as a matter of fact, had not concealed from Talleyrand his regret at seeing the cessation of the negotiations. "I am most dissatisfied with the Pope," he told him. "He abuses the need I think the people have for religion and for the unsworn priests whom they alone esteem. But, indeed, what can be done with this constitutional *canaille* if it is not encircled by true priests." These were harsh words to the ex-Bishop of Autun, and he pretended not to hear. As for the First Consul, he seemed flattered by Consalvi's overtures, and inclined to reopen discussion with him. The Cardinal thought that it would be impossible to have the clause about state religion reinserted, but by means of this large concession, he managed the rejection of the article about the constitutional bishops and seemed unwilling to examine the clause about "married priests."

For the first time Talleyrand had missed his aim. In a vehement memorandum, he emphasized how inconvenient it would be "to suppress in his project the article relative to married ecclesiastics." "This article," he said, "was as indispensable morally as that about national properties. It would be a sovereign injustice to leave undecided the condition of a great many individuals (he was exaggerating a great deal) who have become citizens and fathers of families. This measure would draw overzealous partisans to the cause of reconciliation, and without it, they would be the most dangerous enemies." But Rome remained completely inflexible on this point, and Bonaparte was in a hurry to finish up. Nevertheless Pius VII consented to absolve priests who had broken with the Church and had married, but he excluded monks and bishops from this gracious amnesty.

Bonaparte no longer seemed to attach any interest to the question. Talleyrand realized that he was thoroughly beaten. He understood that if he were too insistent, he would run the risk of unmasking himself before the First Consul. With his usual tact, he said that he had to go take the waters at Bourbon-l'Archambault, and under this pretext of having to restore his health, he let the Concordat be concluded without him, but he still did not despair of somehow winning his secularization from Rome. "We are arranging things with the Cardinal," the First Consul wrote to him on July 7. "They have put a second plaster on my arm. . . . Illness is an opportune moment for coming to an understanding with priests." This Voltairean laughter was intended to disarm any possible ill humor on the part of the minister, who showed none, however, even when he learned in the *Monitor* eight days later that the

Concordat had been signed. He had not been able to triumph over the resistance of the Curia, and all his trickery had served only to delay the event which in his heart he had always thought inevitable and perhaps desirable. He was a good sport, and he almost admired these Roman priests for not letting themselves be intimidated or maneuvered.

Talleyrand is secularized

He tried, however, to have the issue taken up again. Once the Concordat had been signed, he began new negotiations about his own difficult case. He wrote himself to Pius VII, avowing that he had fallen into "grave errors" (which he did not specify), and soliciting the Holy Father to free him once and for all from all his religious obligations and to restore him unreservedly to "lay communion." He moved Bonaparte to take action in the matter. Cardinal Caprara, the French legate, wrote to Consalvi on February 2, 1802, that the First Consul showed the keenest desire for the regularization of the position of the ex-Bishop of Autun. "He declares," the legate added, "that his minister worked two years with him for the re-establishment of religion . . . and that this minister merits the greatest condescensions from Our Holiness in this respect." Consalvi was no more convinced than Pius VII, for Talleyrand's letter, which only vaguely admitted "some errors," had not made a good impression. "The Holy Father," Consalvi answered Caprara, "cannot absolve him without at least some sign of repentance, no matter how slight." Bonaparte insisted. Finally on March 10, 1802, the Pope decided to sign a "brief of reconciliation," in which he praised the sinner for "blushing" for his grave errors and, "because of this fortunate shamefacedness," he charged the legate to absolve the unhappy penitent of "all the censures which bind him."

The words themselves were enough to irritate Talleyrand's pride, but he was less moved by what he found than by what he did not find in the brief, which absolved but did not free him. Caprara, a timid man, did not dare give him the document, but Talleyrand knew the spirit of it. Talleyrand knew how important precedents were to the Curia, and he searched all through ecclesiastical history for cases which might be considered parallel to his own and which had been decided in a manner conforming to his hopes. With citations from all these precedents, he sent the First Consul to the attack. "I am sending Your Holiness," Bonaparte wrote, "a note which has been given me relative to a request for secularization by Citizen Talleyrand. This request is personally agreeable to me."

The Congregations studied the note, but none of these precedents,

unearthed with so much labor, bore any real analogy to the case of the ex-Bishop of Autun. Pius VII admitted the possibility of secularization, however, but in his reply to the First Consul, he refused even to consider freeing Talleyrand from ecclesiastical celibacy. "There does not exist in eighteen centuries a single example," he added, "of dispensation granted to a consecrated bishop in order that he might marry." Consalvi addressed a letter to the same effect to Talleyrand, but enveloped the refusal in courtly formulas of regret: "I truly desired that Your Excellency's wishes should be accomplished in their entirety and that the brief contain permission for marriage." The Cardinal sent him, however, only a brief returning him to lay communion, authorizing him to wear civil garb, and to fulfill public duties.

Talleyrand took this miscalculation badly, but Bonaparte took it in better part. He pretended to think that the brief regularized his minister's situation well enough, and intended to give the greatest publicity to the Church's action. Without consulting Talleyrand, the Council of State was called to record the document. Some of the "philosopher" councilors laughed and even protested, for of what importance was it whether or not the Minister of Foreign Relations was restored to this famous "lay communion," except "on the day of his burial when he may receive ecclesiastical interrment"? But the First Consul went even further. He had a note published in the *Monitor* under his signature, calling attention to "the brief of Pope Pius VII, granted at Saint Peter's in Rome on June 29, 1802, by which citizen Maurice Talleyrand, Minister of Foreign Relations, was restored in full to lay and secular life."

The minister pretended to remember only these last words, which of course were not in the brief. Until the day he died, he maintained that he could have considered himself authorized to use this "in full" even for marriage. It is hard to believe that he was sincere, but his frenetic desire to please his beguiling mistress created this voluntary blindness.

He had worked, plotted, and pleaded for secularization only to be able to give his name to a woman who was far from worthy of it. By obstinately refusing him, Rome showed more charity than she would have in granting his request. It is surprising that such an intelligent man did not see that the churchmen had done all they could to keep him from making his greatest blunder.

11

A TROUBLESOME MARRIAGE

Will he marry her?

THE CIRCUMSTANCES under which a liaison was formed between Maurice de Talleyrand, then a minister of the Directory, and Catherine Grand, née Worlée, are well known. The woman whom he took into his life was as alluring as she was unintelligent, at once the beauty and the beast. She had continued to wield this unusual influence over him, which cannot be explained simply by the predominance of his sensuality, though it was great, over his pride. Talleyrand could not ignore the fact that Catherine was soon as famous for her prodigious stupidity as for her dazzling beauty, but he maintained that such physical charm made up for everything else and that he was content with "the mind of a rose." Was she so awkward after all, since, succeeding to so many great and charming ladies in Maurice's affection, she found a way of making him marry her and thus proved that she was much less foolish than this clever man?

If he can be believed, Napoleon, far from favoring such an "infamous" marriage, insisted that Talleyrand get rid of this woman. In any case, he flatly refused his consent to a "dishonorable" marriage. "He has married his shameful mistress in spite of me, to the scandal of Europe," he wrote to Molé in 1813. It is believable that this was in spite of Napoleon, for this was the time when he was trying to organize morals as well as the law, and he demanded at least what he called "appearances" in default of this morality which was so difficult to impose. He quarreled with his brother Lucien, rather than accept Alexandrine Jouberton, another ex-woman of the world, as his sister-in-law. By hundreds of such actions, he affirmed his wish to "elevate the dignity of marriage, of the family, and of society" by putting an end to scandals which were less shocking than that of which Talleyrand, his most prominent minister, was the subject. Catherine Grand, who was notorious for having passed from man to man before she fastened on this rich prey, was more than any other an object of contempt and abomina-

tion to Bonaparte. Yet by insisting that Pius VII restore the ex-bishop to "lay communion . . . in full," he had seemed to smooth the way for the frenetic desires of Catherine Grand and the perhaps less frenetic desires of her illustrious lover. The First Consul's attitude has been poorly understood.

According to certain witnesses, far from opposing the marriage, he suddenly imposed it. Perhaps Talleyrand was the first to give credit to this rumor. Mme de Rémusat wrote that the Consul gave the minister the choice of marrying his mistress or of getting rid of her. This lady was Talleyrand's friend, and was glad to be his echo, but Méneval, Bonaparte's secretary and intimate, confirmed the story.

Having been informed that certain foreign ministers had refused to be presented to Mme Grand, who presided over receptions at the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Bonaparte decreed simply that she be sent away. Catherine then rushed to Josephine, whom she had known well in the easy-going days of the Directory, and begged for her intervention. Josephine pleaded the cause of her old friend, and even brought her before her husband, where she fell on her knees and implored him with tears. Perhaps touched by her tears or worn out by the persistence of the two women, the Consul finally said, "I see only one thing to do. Let Talleyrand marry you and everything will be arranged, but you must bear his name or no longer appear at his house." Faced with such a situation, Talleyrand decided to give the woman his name in order to keep her. Chateaubriand, who always detested Talleyrand, explained Napoleon's decision as the result of the contempt which he was already beginning to feel for his minister and of his hope of keeping him well in hand because of this degradation. With his usual virulence, Chateaubriand added that the master "attached" Mme de Talleyrand to her husband as if she were a "billboard."

All this seems most exaggerated to me. In 1802 Bonaparte had not yet developed the antipathy mixed with contempt which he felt for the Prince de Bénévent when he had become his mortal enemy. I cannot believe that he would knowingly have tried to dishonor his minister. For the sake of "good order," it is possible that just as for a moment he wished him to put on the violet gown again, so he may have seen the regularization of his liaison as a solution conforming to "social order." Perhaps he still had enough esteem for Talleyrand to think that if he were faced with the choice of marrying this woman of ruined reputation or sending her away, he would choose the latter. The Consul was soon convinced, however, that rather than give her up, he would leave his position. Since he wanted to keep a valuable minister, he accepted

Catherine, but he did not conceal the disdain which Talleyrand's decision aroused in him.

The marriage

On September 19 at the city hall of the tenth district, a magistrate performed the marriage of "Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, aged 48, and Catherine-Noël Worlée, aged 39, . . . divorced wife of George Francis Grand." The contract, by which the husband gave the wife part of his already considerable personal fortune, had been signed at Neuilly the evening before. The First Consul and Josephine had put their names at the bottom of the contract, as had the two other consuls, the secretary of the consuls, Maret, and Talleyrand's two brothers, Boson and Archambaud. Catherine entered upon a respectable life with all honors, all profits, and all security.

The consequences

The new household had to undergo no changes. Once she had become Citizeness Talleyrand-Périgord, Catherine was simply more self-assured when she received in her salon on the Rue du Bac, but she still must have been the laughing-stock of the visitors, especially the ladies. When one of them made an allusion to the rich present which her new husband was supposed to be about to give her, she exclaimed, "Oh, my goodness, Madame, you are mistaken. Do you think that I have married the Pope?" When her husband presented her officially to the First Consul, she was rather rudely received, for Bonaparte intended to make her pay for her victory. "I hope," he told her, "that the conduct of Citizeness Talleyrand will cause the conduct of Citizeness Grand to be forgotten." She answered with a naïveté that may have been feigned or sincere, "Citizen First Consul, I have only to inspire myself with the example of Citizeness Bonaparte."

If the anecdote is true, Bonaparte considered her simply as a fool, and he had no need of such witticisms to consider her presence in his circle indecent. Paying no regard to his minister's wounded feelings, he forbade Mme de Talleyrand to enter the Tuileries, except in her purely official capacity. He never stopped his persecution of this "shameful mistress," who later became the Princess de Bénévent. When he was thinking about recalling Talleyrand in 1813, and when the latter had many reasons for refusing, the Emperor added one by making the dismissal of his wife the condition of his return to the ministry. The joke is that Talleyrand pretended to be indignant about this condition, like a good husband outraged by an insult to his wife. Now in 1813 this

lady had long been put out of his life. In 1807 she wrote to him most tenderly, "I love you more than anything and embrace you with all my heart," and signed herself, "Your Kelly." But at this time it was the Prince de Bénévent who no longer loved Kelly "more than anything," and who no longer embraced her "with all his heart." "A rose," Citizen Talleyrand had called her, but in 1807 the rose had already been fading for years, and the time was soon coming when the Prince, with incredible harshness, would banish her from his dwelling as from his heart, where she had been replaced by a younger woman. All that was left her was the vain pleasure of signing herself "Catherine, reigning (*sic*) Princess de Bénévent." He kept her at a distance and after 1815, he even exiled her to England, whence she returned to die in Paris, without the Prince's even visiting her during her last moments. When she had become old and fat, Kelly was simply a ball and chain to him. When he learned of her death, the ex-bishop merely said, "That simplifies my position a great deal." One might have expected a differerent funeral oration from the man who had almost ruined the Concordat of 1801 and who had almost lost his position in 1802 for the sake of satisfying this woman's ambitions.

12

FOREIGN RELATIONS UNDER THE CONSULATE

Talleyrand is set aside

THE FIRST CONSUL'S wish to keep his minister is proved by the fact that he authorized his marriage, in spite of his open hostility to his wife. But valuable as he thought him, Bonaparte did not plan to set him on the heights. Among the ministers of the Consulate, almost each one of whom had solid merits to recommend him in his own field, Talleyrand stood out, and yet, in 1801 and 1802 when treaty negotiations were going on at Lunéville, London, and Amiens which were to establish the general peace he had preached for so long, he seemed to be paradoxically absent from the discussions. The First Consul wanted his brother, Joseph, to appear as the only negotiator of the peace, thinking that at least the name of Bonaparte, not this poor wretch, would thus be most brilliantly associated with the pacification of Europe. After he and Cobenzl had signed the peace with Austria at Lunéville on February 9, 1801, Joseph and Lord Cornwallis signed the peace with England at Amiens on March 25, 1802. Otto, a most capable diplomat, had gone to London to negotiate and sign even the preliminaries of October 1, 1801, which prepared the peace of Amiens. Talleyrand's name does not appear in any of these important actions. Queen Hortense reports in her *Memoirs* that, like the Parisian masses, Talleyrand did not even know about the signing of these preliminaries, until the cannon of the Invalides was fired, and that during the evening at Malmaison, he could not conceal his justifiable displeasure from the First Consul.

The first uneasiness

This displeasure was even greater because no one had more sincerely wanted a general peace than the former Minister of the Directory, no one had worked harder for it than the Minister of Foreign Relations

under the Consulate. Bonaparte had certainly let him take over the correspondence with the negotiators, but had planned to let him do no more, since such a role would escape public notice. The Consul, moreover, had formed the habit of dictating important dispatches word for word to his minister, so that certain letters signed by Talleyrand are rightfully included in the *Collected Correspondence of Napoleon.*

The minister had to resign himself to seeming to play a second-rate role. After all, his dream of the pacification of Europe seemed about to be realized, and he hoped that this event would create a new era and a new atmosphere in which he would find himself more at ease. He hoped that Bonaparte would be so well satisfied with the results that he would turn all his attention to the reorganization of the state, which was already under way, and would leave his minister in charge of foreign affairs. He especially wanted the task of shaping the results of the peace according to the traditions of high diplomacy.

Talleyrand knew Europe too well to believe that she would unreservedly accept the results of these ten years of war with France. With her new frontiers, France still touched on Italy, Switzerland, and Holland, and even the German states on the right bank of the Rhine were under her control. She exercised a more or less undisguised protectorate over these areas, thus assuring herself an empire. The force of her victories and conquests was felt throughout Europe.

Even though the First Consul had been very moderate at Amiens as well as at Lunéville, Europe was still mortified by all these victories and conquests. Talleyrand knew better than anyone else that she only seemed to yield, and that it would be a long time before she would give up the hope of a great revenge.

This was all the more reason, the minister thought, to practice a policy of moderation with attentive prudence. If embittered enemies were lying in wait, every care must be taken not to give them any motive or even any pretext to take up arms, and every gesture had to be avoided which might give rise to the belief that an expansionist policy was to be started again.

. . . . .

The Piedmont Territory, which had been taken from the King of Sardinia in 1798 and whose fate had not yet been decided, was still occupied by French troops. The Batavian, the Cisalpine, and the Helvetian Republics which had been created by the French victory were being reorganized with difficulty, and since they hoped to become stable states, they naturally turned towards France. Later when the Holy Roman Empire was threatened with ruin and Germany was dis-

solving in quarrels, Prussia first, and then others, sought arbitration in Paris. But if France agreed to regulate the fate of these states, even as a simple arbitrator solicited by her neighbors, she would lay herself open to the charge of expansionism. What would happen if she were not content with military occupation of the Piedmont, but went so far as to annex it? The situation would be even more serious and the peace would again be endangered.

After the deputies of the Cisalpine Republic (baptized the Italian Republic), had elected Bonaparte as president of their state on January 11, 1802, and after Holland had become an even more closely subordinate state, the First Consul agreed on December 5 to grant the Helvetian cantons the "act of mediation" which would strengthen French influence in Switzerland, and then upon the urgent request of the German princes, especially of Prussia, he presided over the "Recess of the German Empire" which profoundly altered the constitution of Germany. Finally the Piedmont was annexed to France, despite Russia's support of the dispossessed King of Sardinia.

According to his own testimony, Talleyrand did everything possible to dissuade Bonaparte from these actions, especially from the annexation of the Piedmont, which he described in his *Memoirs* as "a most monstrous violation of the most sacred aspect of a people's rights." As a matter of fact, the violation was no more monstrous than many others which had been committed in Europe since the partition of Poland, such as the annexation of Venice by Austria, which was confirmed at Campo-Formio and Lunéville, and Prussia's seizure of so many German territories to which she had no right. At the Congress of Vienna twelve years later, Talleyrand himself sanctioned "violations" which were just as "monstrous."

Talleyrand was, I think, more accurate when he wrote that the restitution of the King of Sardinia would have been "an act of justice and shrewd politics." He adds that he "made vain efforts in relation to this matter of annexation to turn the First Consul away from the measure," and that "only his vanity prevailed over the counsel of prudence." According to the report of Lucchesini, the Prussian minister, he also fought against the Consul's intervention in Swiss affairs, even "offering his resignation" if he accepted the "mediation."

Instead of the *Memoirs,* which are only a clever patchwork of self-justification and often of lies, and even instead of Lucchesini's remarks, one would like to possess the letters or notes in which the minister advised against the measures which he said alarmed him so much. None has been found which supports the story of such violent disapproval.

It was he whom Bonaparte entrusted with the preparation of the constitution for the new Italian Republic, which he wanted to be "short . . . and obscure," probably so that it could be more easily tossed aside one day.

Moreover, he was one of the most active participants in the Germanic "Recess," which caused the greatest displeasure to Austria, who was almost ousted from Germany, and he seemed to have shown no disapproval of either the principles or the results.

There is no evidence that he ever recommended the evacuation of Holland nor that he disapproved of the expedition to Santo Domingo, which was destined to lay the foundation of an overseas empire. The continued occupation of the Netherlands and these colonial acquisitions were the real cause of England's breaking the peace of Amiens after a few months. It is indisputable, and I do not think it has been disputed for some time, that this rupture was the result of England's alarm at the advantages which France was obtaining from the peace. It was these advantages which the First Consul planned to gain both in and out of Europe, as well as his refusal to sign the commercial treaty so passionately desired by London, which made the British government refuse to restore their island to the Knights of Malta and to remain solidly installed there, despite their promises.

In all likelihood Talleyrand deplored the First Consul's attitude, as well as that of England herself, for his sentiments were conciliatory and his policy pacifist. It seems, however, that he limited the expression of his sentiments and the defense of his policy to mere observations and very mildly stated advice. Undoubtedly it pleased him, as usual, to give the various European representatives the impression that he completely disapproved of his master's deeds and words. Lucchesini, for example, echoed his indiscretions in Berlin, and Talleyrand was not the man to reveal his thoughts without having some design in mind. Count de Markof, the Russian minister, wrote to Saint Petersburg that the measures taken by the First Consul showed that his was "a mind that had a tendency towards complete madness" and that "such is the principal minister's opinion of all his political plans." Finally, Hubler, an agent of the English embassy, wrote on May 3 to point out the efforts made to keep the peace by certain persons around Bonaparte, and added, "As for M. de Talleyrand, you know that his interest is so decidedly tied up with the peace that you can count on his help if any incident should give him that influence which his lack of energy denies him." Europe was already getting used to the idea that Talleyrand disapproved of the policy which he served, thanks to certain carefully committed indiscre-

tions. But to what degree this disapproval, which was probably real, was expressed to this First Consul, is probably a question to which the answer will never be known.

It is true that until the very last moment, Talleyrand tried to prevent a complete rupture with England. When the ultimatum sent from London seemed to make the rupture inevitable, the First Consul's attitude made it clear to Withworth, the English ambassador, that he accused his minister of too great a desire for peace at any price, a desire which had encouraged the audacious pretensions of London. It was with the Consul's consent, however, that the minister literally clung to this ambassador to keep him from leaving France. When Withworth had already left Paris and was reclaiming his passport at Chantilly, and Talleyrand sent him a note which almost yielded on the Malta question, it is hard to believe that the fact was unknown to his master.

Indeed, once the peace was broken, the minister adopted a most hostile attitude towards England. Since in spite of the most extreme concessions, England wanted war, he was ready to give it to her. "What we need is a sound peace," he once said to Josephine, "and war alone can give it to us, but I am sure that the year 1806 will be the climateric of the peace established by Bonaparte and of a peace that will be sound because it will be impossible to trouble it." In October, 1803, upon receiving the news that the British cabinet was trying to persuade Austria to join the fray, he signed a very haughty declaration of the First Consul's: "If Austria mixes in, then it will be England who will have forced us to conquer Europe . . . and really to establish that Empire of the Gauls with which she seeks to frighten Europe."

The fact that Talleyrand's signature was put to such a statement shows how deeply he was resigned to serving the imperialist policy, no matter how opposed he was or wished to seem in secret. For what reasons? I have already quoted the remark of a foreign minister: "You may count on his help, if some incident gives him the influence which his lack of energy denies him."

Moreover, the mysterious informer who sent the Count d'Antraigue daily reports from the Tuileries itself, wrote of Talleyrand: "He has a weakness, a love of his position, which makes him actually mad when he is in fear of displeasing."

"Lack of energy," no. Neither lack of energy nor fear of displeasing made him serve a policy so opposed to his own. He had powerful interests at stake, and needed to keep his position not because of ambition but because of his passion for money which was always the mainspring of his life.

13

THE FOUNDATION OF "THE IMMENSE FORTUNE"

NO MINISTER was ever better than Talleyrand at making money out of his duties, his acts, his deeds, his successes, and even his failures.

The fact that his whole life was a prodigious money-making enterprise is what makes him literally unbearable even to those who praise his policy and who smooth over his treacheries. He never concealed his increasingly violent desire to turn his position into profit.

He was born a *grand seigneur* with a relatively modest fortune. He loved a lavish life, a life in which one can spend without counting costs. In his youth he had formed the most costly habits: women, high living, and especially gambling. There was no avarice in his cupidity, for he made money only to spend it. He never wanted money for its own sake, but for the satisfactions it assures, the enjoyment it procures, the pleasures for which it pays. Fouché died fifteen times a millionaire, but he led a cramped and economical life, hoarding his money like a miser. Talleyrand, who had nothing of the parvenu in his make-up, piled up his money like a prodigal, and wanted it for pleasures, luxury, for the sake of being in a dominant position everywhere. He wanted it for pride's sake, too, for as he said to Vitrolles one day, "You see, you must never be a poor devil; I've always been rich."

He had no scruples about the means of obtaining wealth. "He would sell his soul," said Mirabeau, and Napoleon once exclaimed, "You would sell your father!" His profound amorality made everything easy for him, especially the acquisition of wealth. Danton said, "I have been paid only for what I should have done without being paid." Talleyrand was paid both for what he would have done without payment and for what he would not have done.

Hardly had he assumed his position as minister under the Directory than he began to realize his dream of an "immense fortune." It was a period when the whole world seemed interested only in getting rich, and everything could be bought or sold. Talleyrand, like all the others,

used every means to enrich himself: speculations on the Exchange, which were always easy for a minister; lucrative undertakings, huge commissions, and prodigious "tips." His position brought in a great deal, and he hid none of it. I shall tell only one out of hundreds of anecdotes. When Livingstone, the new minister from the United States, visited him to discuss a new commercial treaty for which negotiations were going on, Talleyrand, staring at him fixedly, asked him point-blank,

"Have you any money?"

"But, Citizen Minister . . ."

"Answer frankly, have you any money?"

"Yes, but I don't understand."

"Nothing is simpler, however. But that isn't all. Have you much? You see, in this country, it's very difficult to do business. You need a lot of money, and with that there are no difficulties that can't be ironed out."

And the rumor arose that the conclusion of the treaty brought the minister two and a half millions. Barras knew the exact amount, and that of many other commissions he received, and revealed it later, thinking to disgrace the man who had betrayed him. But Barras, like Talleyrand and everyone else, could also be "reached." It has been said that in a few months the minister amassed more than ten millions, so that in Fructidor, year VII, he was able to hand in his resignation for the sake of political prudence without having to fear any financial discomforts as a result. When he returned to the world of affairs (he always used the word in every possible sense), he instantly planned to make his position pay.

"How does it happen that you possess such a fortune?" the Emperor asked him one day, thinking to embarrass him.

"Nothing more natural."

"You have done some business?"

"Indeed."

"What kind of business?"

"Oh, it's very simple. I bought stock on the seventeenth of Brumaire, and sold it three days later." This flattery convinced no one, least of all Napoleon.

I have said that he did not sign the Treaty of Lunéville but that he prepared it. Long before the negotiations had begun, he had received seven and a half millions from Austria, and while they were going on, Austria handed over another 7,650,000—over fifteen millions for this treaty with which he was supposed to have hardly anything to do. The terror which Bonaparte's ambition inspired in Europe was a great

source of income for his minister. He had convinced the foreign powers that his influence over the terrible Consul was ten times stronger than it really was. A certain foreign agent wrote of him, "Despite his feeble appearance, nonetheless, he leads both his master and Europe." Since it was believed that he "led his master," Europe tried to buy his good graces, since it was also known that he was venal. There was not a negotiation, not a treaty, which did not add a few millions to his fortune, and often these gifts were simply intended to make Talleyrand well disposed towards the donor. He no longer had to ask, "Have you any money?" People gave it to him without waiting for the question, and often he had the satisfaction of selling what he would have given.

All Europe was in upheaval, a state in which she remained for the twelve years following. A state would lose or gain millions of square miles, millions of "souls," millions in revenues. The First Consul of the Republic was the all-powerful arbitrator. His probity and integrity were known to place him above these markets where there was such traffic in "souls," but could he busy himself with the details of these bargain sales? Talleyrand was the intermediary. He presented reports to the master, made calculations, gave advice, estimated the advantages, and was sure to find some of his own, which he smilingly called his "tidbits." Soon all Europe was talking of "M. de Talleyrand's tidbits." The largest undertaking was the reorganization of the Germanic empire. Secularized bishoprics were distributed to all the princes, each of whom held out his hand full of florins. The Consul put Talleyrand in charge of the details. "A sort of work," wrote his dear friend, Mme de Rémusat, "which laid the foundations of his immense fortune." The operation did not simply lay the foundations; in a few months it seems to have doubled his fortune. The requests of Berlin were received with surprising benevolence, since Talleyrand did not like Prussia and would hardly have favored her at the expense of Austria. The First Consul, on the contrary, was well disposed, and Talleyrand suddenly found himself full of good will towards Berlin. Lucchesini, the Prussian minister, was almost overcome by so much active benevolence. Perhaps he had not been authorized to pay the expenses of such sudden good will. Everyone paid spontaneously. Dalberg confided to a certain Frenchman that "one day he took a million to Talleyrand on behalf of the Duke of Baden after a negotiation favorable to the duchy." If any prince who had suffered damages was to receive indemnity, he himself had to supervise the matter closely if he wanted to receive the money. In 1804 the King of Prussia informed Napoleon that 600,000 florins were still lacking from the indemnity of several millions promised to his brother-in-

law, the Prince of Orange-Nassau. The Emperor ordered an inquiry and it was discovered that seventeen millions, including these 600,000 florins, had somehow "gone astray" in the offices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Napoleon questioned Talleyrand, who blandly declared that he knew nothing about the matter. "What a liar!" exclaimed Napoleon to Maret. Is it at all astonishing that by the end of the Consulate the Minister's fortune was estimated at forty millions, which would equal much more than four hundred millions today?

From the very beginning, Napoleon knew about the good returns his minister was getting. He said later of Talleyrand, "As far as he was concerned, my business was a bargain sale." How, with his love of order, was he able to tolerate this? Yet he clung to him. "Whom would we put in the Foreign Relations office?" he asked Maret after the Orange-Nassau affair. He was convinced that since Talleyrand would serve only if it were to his interest, then the service of a new master must be turned to his interest. If foreigners were so foolish as to pay him, that was up to them, "the imbeciles." He allowed Talleyrand these princely "tips," these "tidbits," as he had once allowed him his Catherine Grand, so that he could be sure of him. He thought that by so discrediting himself, the man would be at his mercy, that he would never risk losing such a lucrative position. Doubtless there was a danger in letting him enrich himself to such a point. "Not to be dependent," Talleyrand had written to Mme de Staël. Once he was "immensely rich," would he not be likely to seek his independence? But Napoleon knew that this millionaire spent his money so freely that he was always on the verge of financial embarrassment.

In 1813, Napoleon told Molé, "As everyone knows, Talleyrand has certainly stolen more than anyone in the world, yet he hasn't a penny and I am obliged to support him out of my own funds and to pay his debts at this moment." Indeed, this multimillionaire stretched out a begging hand to everyone, saying that he was ruined or close to it.

He was always ruining himself. With the first great profits he realized under the Directory, he bought mansions and villas, paid for a stable and a great household. Under the Consulate, he purchased the former Créqui mansion on the rue d'Anjou, one villa at Auteuil and another at Passy where he gave parties. He sold them only to buy his house at Neuilly, where he continued to give sumptuous receptions. He loved parties, and those which he gave dazzled even the Paris that was so used to spending huge sums on its pleasures. The *soirée* which he held in Bonaparte's honor on January 3, 1798, was long famous. "That must have cost you dear," said Mme Angot. "Oh, it was nothing at all,"

answered Talleyrand, although the affair had cost a half million. All his parties "cost dear."

He continued to gamble recklessly and to pay high for all his whims. Every year he went to take the waters at Bourbon-l'Archambault and while he was supposed to take a rest from dissipation as well as from work, he led the life of a *grand seigneur.*

To complete his design, he still needed an estate. The First Consul furnished him with the means of getting one. "I should like to see you buy a fine property," he said one day, "and to give brilliant receptions there for the diplomatic corps and for distinguished foreigners, so that everyone will want to visit you there and so that an invitation will be a sort of recompense for the ambassadors and the sovereigns with whom I am content." Legendre de Luçay, one of the prefects of the consular palace, who was present at the conversation, suggested the château and estate of Valençay, which had become too expensive for him. He asked 1,600,000. Talleyrand said that he could not pay so much. To oblige Luçay as well as Talleyrand, Bonaparte said that he would help out with the purchase and he paid almost all of it. The minister came into possession of a magnificent estate, extending over twenty-three communes of the department of Indre—19,472 hectares of forest and land, one of the most beautiful parks in France, and a historic château. Thus Talleyrand, once a *déclassé,* was established in a princely estate, upon which he was buried.

The sale took place on Floréal 17, year XI (May 7, 1802), and the next summer Talleyrand took his vacation at the ancient château, as he did almost every year afterwards. His master's generosity had added magnificence to his "immense fortune."

14

THE AFFAIR OF THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

Talleyrand and the restoration of the throne

THESE ENORMOUS profits were the secret of the complaisance with which Talleyrand lent his name to policies of which he was said to disapprove.

In 1803 the master did not seem inclined to replace him with anyone else. He continued to prize his experience and his understanding of so many things, his suppleness which enabled him to carry out with elegance ideas with which he did not agree, so for these and other reasons Talleyrand had never been in greater favor than at the end of 1803.

Lucien had been set aside, and Fouché, too, but he remained, with the pleasing conviction that he would remain for a long time.

As a consequence, he had a passionate desire to see the government even more securely entrenched and to have his master's power exalted and perpetuated. Talleyrand was not only one of the first who dreamed of transforming the Consul's seat into a throne, but he was also one of those who worked most perseveringly towards this end during the first four years of the Consulate.

He had the growing conviction that, except for some unforeseen event, he would never find any credit with the exiled Bourbons. The ex-bishop suspected even more strongly that the men about the princes would be disposed to treat the "traitor of Autun" even more ignominiously than they would the regicide deputies. The Bourbons must be disposed of, but he would gladly have adopted Napoleon's saying before the Council of State: "One suppresses only what one replaces." As long as a Republic existed, even if in name only, there was a possibility of return to the Bourbon monarchy. Such a return would be infinitely more difficult, if not impossible, if the still monarchical spirit of the country were satisfied by the restoration of the throne and the establishment of another dynasty. Napoleon, who realized that he had worked for an increase of power before the Consulship for life had been established, and then for the coming of the Empire, said to Caulain-

court in 1812, "He is one of those who have contributed to the establishment of my dynasty."

By the end of 1803, the Empire was being prepared. While it was more necessary to win the adherence of rightist elements than had been the case with the Consulate, Talleyrand was intelligent enough to see that a new regime could not be firmly established without the support of the former partisans of the Revolution. To overcome any reluctance on the part of these old republicans, Napoleon had to give them the most convincing assurances of his solidarity with the recent past. The former regicide members of the Convention who peopled the Assemblies and the administration did not think otherwise, but they did not even dare to imagine the act which would prove the new Emperor's solidarity with the ideas and even with the excesses of the Revolution. It is strange that what these people, even Fouché, hesitated to demand or even suggest was coldly and deliberately proposed to Bonaparte by Talleyrand, whose ancestors had so faithfully served the Bourbons: the execution of a Bourbon.

The contriver of an "assassination"

"The assassination of the Duke d'Enghien was committed by Napoleon only to reassure the regicides, by placing him on their level, and by making him one of them, and could never be excused nor pardoned, nor has it ever been. Thus Bonaparte was reduced to boasting about it." Who is the author of such lines? Old Prince de Talleyrand, writing his *Memoirs* twenty-five years later.

No chapter in the history of these troubled times has been more carefully studied. Boulay de Meurthe, a learned and conscientious historian, has a three-volume collection, based on thousands of documents, entitled "Documents Pertaining to the Death of the Duke d'Enghien," and the historians who have made use of it all agree that it was Talleyrand who suggested, when no one had thought of it, who formally advised, who actively prepared, who represented as necessary, not only the arrest but also the execution of the prince. As Minister of Foreign Relations, moreover, he openly approved of the act and sought to justify it in the eyes of other Courts. He worked most tenaciously for what he had the audacity to call an "assassination," as if he could wash his hands of it. And yet we still do not know the chief documents which undoubtedly would overwhelm him with more accusations than the published ones have.

It is well known that when the Prince de Bénévent was president of the provisory government in 1814 and was about to recall Louis XVIII

to the throne, he had the archives cleared of all documents which could compromise him, especially all his letters to Bonaparte about the Duke d'Enghien. A single one, which Chateaubriand claims that he saw, escaped. Having slipped behind one of the drawers in which Napoleon kept this compromising dossier in his office at the Tuileries, this letter was unnoticed by Talleyrand's agents. Chateaubriand gives an extract from this letter, which was dated March 8, 1804, and Napoleon's former secretary, Méneval, declared that he had read this letter after 1814 and remembered having seen it formerly in the Emperor's possession. The minister wrote to the First Consul that he had thought over their conversation of the day before (relative to the Duke d'Enghien). The French people, he remarked, loved the head of the State and had confidence in him, but they could lose this confidence through fear that Bonaparte would play a monk's role. The Consul had to destroy this fear by some breath-taking action. He had an opportunity; it had been definitely proved that the Cadoudal-Pichegru conspiracy, which had almost cost the Consul's life, had been inspired by the Bourbons and that the Duke d'Enghien had been involved in it. The safety of the State required that there should be no exceptions made in dealing out punishment. This is the résumé that Méneval made from memory. Chateaubriand, who says that he was able to copy out a passage, quotes *in extenso:* "If justice requires punishment, policy demands punishment without exception," and "May I suggest M. de Caulaincourt to the First Consul, a man to whom he can give orders and who will execute them with as much discretion as fidelity."

It is true that Chateaubriand was Talleyrand's mortal enemy, and that Méneval was Napoleon's faithful friend. But could each one have forged the sentences which one quotes and the other analyzes? But what difference does it make? I have studied these tragic events without relying on this famous letter of March 8 which we do not possess, and established Talleyrand's responsibility without it. The letter is simply a confirmation.

The Cadoudal-Pichegru conspiracy, in which Moreau was implicated, was discovered at the end of January and the plotters were arrested at the end of February. There was a conviction that the Count d'Artois had encouraged the conspirators from London and had even promised to join them, but the First Consul, who had been violently upset by the revelation of the plot, knew that the prince had been forewarned and would not land. He was satisfied with the arrest of the leaders of the plot and did not think of striking at a Bourbon. He did not hold one of

them, either, since the Count d'Artois had finally hidden himself upon the appeal of his friends.

It was Talleyrand who on March 1 drew Bonaparte's attention to the presence of the Duke d'Enghien, grandson of the Prince de Condé, at Ettenheim, a few miles from Strassburg in the grand duchy of Baden. The young prince was said to be trying to agitate Alsace by means of his emissaries. Bonaparte was absolutely ignorant of this prince's sojourn so close to his frontiers and was perhaps even unaware of his existence. He said so later to Caulaincourt: "It was Talleyrand who made me decide to arrest the Duke d'Enghien of whom I was not even thinking . . . I was far from attaching the slightest importance to his stay on the banks of the Rhine and from having any designs upon him." Hortense once heard Napoleon say of Talleyrand, who in 1809 was already washing his hands of the assassination, "I find it amusing that he plays his tricks at my expense. Did I know the Duke d'Enghien? Was it I who wanted to have him killed?"

The report transmitted by Talleyrand tended to link the Duke's real but exaggerated underhand dealings with the Paris conspiracy. Bonaparte finally believed in his connivance when another report erroneously announced that ex-General Dumouriez was living near the young prince. By linking the supposed presence of Dumouriez with that of Pichegru at Paris, the First Consul began to see some connection between the young prince's attitude and the conspiracy which had been discovered. But he was far from having him arrested and shot on foreign territory.

In his perplexity, he called together Cambacérès, Fouché, Murat, and Talleyrand for a consultation. Taking it for granted that Dumouriez' presence at Ettenheim had been proved, Talleyrand advised that an example should be made of the Duke.

Knowing of the Bourbons' apparently irreconcilable feelings towards him, he was full of apprehension at the thought that the plot had almost accomplished their restoration. "Talleyrand wanted to put a river of blood between Napoleon and the Bourbons," wrote Barras, who perhaps recalled the time in 1798 when Talleyrand, then minister under the Directory, had coldly proposed to lay an ambush at Wesel for all the princes of the House and to get rid of them "in one fine haul." In the council of March 10, where only Cambacérès, with a courage rare in him, dared to oppose the arrest, Talleyrand played the chief role in another sense. Murat, who was then governor of Paris, said that he was ready to agree to the project. As an ex-regicide who had even greater

interests at stake than Talleyrand, Fouché was certainly all for such a measure, but with his usual craftiness, he could not be as insistent as Talleyrand because of the very fact that he had been a regicide. Molé, who was in the Emperor's confidence, wrote later, "The Duke d'Enghien perished as the result of a conspiracy of Talleyrand and Fouché who wanted to involve Napoleon and put him in their power by means of a crime which would put him in complicity with them, and after which he could reproach them for nothing in their revolutionary past."

The execution

Talleyrand prevailed, and once the abduction had been decided upon, he sent a note to the Baron of Edelsheim, minister of the Duke of Baden, mentioning the dealings of the Duke d'Enghien and the presence of Dumouriez at his side, and announcing the decision which had been made by the government of the First Consul. This note of March 11, 1804, is enough to prove Talleyrand's responsibility officially. The Duke was abducted on the fifteenth under circumstances which I have recounted elsewhere. He was incarcerated at Vincennes on the twentieth and taken before a military commission on the night of the twentieth. Various appeals for mercy were made to Bonaparte between the fifteenth and twentieth, including a plea by Josephine, who threw herself at his feet to beg him to be merciful. Hortense, who was present at these scenes and who was in her mother's confidence, remarked that Talleyrand, who saw Bonaparte every day, destroyed the effect of Josephine's tears in an instant. Joseph, who had joined his efforts with those of his sister-in-law, found her in despair after one of these visits from the minister. "That cripple makes me tremble," she sighed. The "cripple" finally won out. Condemned to death by the military commission, the prince was executed on the night of the twentieth.

Talleyrand does not seem to have played a comedy of indignation then. On the contrary, it seems that he treated the affair with a cynical lightness in his usual manner. It has been said that on the fateful night he was playing at dice at the Duchess de Luynes', and that at two o'clock he took out his watch and said, "The last Condé has ceased to exist." The next day at the ministry he found one of his chief collaborators, d'Hauterive, almost beside himself because of the news published in the official journal.

"What's the matter with you?" Talleyrand asked. "Your eyes are almost popping out of your head."

"What's the matter with me is what ought to be the matter with you, if you have read the *Monitor*. What a horrible thing!"

"Come, come, are you crazy?" the minister replied. "What's there to make such a fuss about? A conspirator is seized near the frontier, taken to Paris, and shot. What's so extraordinary about that?" He was already preparing letters in which he justified, in the name of the First Consul, the outrage at Ettenheim and the crime at Vincennes. Before four years were up, he began to clear himself, going so far as to say that the deed was done without any intervention on his part and even against his will. By 1808 Napoleon knew that the burden was on his shoulders alone. The Emperor was certainly not the man to play Pontius Pilate. Until his death, he always assumed his share of the responsibility for this tragic event. But neither was he the man to let Talleyrand disclaim his own share at his expense. He never ceased declaring to his confidants that Talleyrand had been the first to draw his attention to the unfortunate prince and had always urged him to be harsh. He meant Talleyrand himself in the following remark of January 28, 1809: "And by whom was I informed of the residence of this unfortunate man? Who urged me to be so rigorous with him?" Talleyrand could certainly not have said a word to the Emperor's face. He had to wait until the time when he had carefully got rid of all compromising papers before he could boldly deny his participation and flinch at the "assassination."

"Oh, well, business is business," he told people who were upset by the deed. The murder of the Duke d'Enghien was a piece of business that facilitated another for him: the restoration of the throne for the benefit of the man the Revolutionaries thought was on their side.

15

TALLEYRAND AND THE WAR WITH AUSTRIA

The advent of the Empire

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE was proclaimed Emperor of the French by the Senate on Floréal 26, year XII (May 16, 1804).

This was the conclusion of a series of undertakings in which it seems that Talleyrand was not actively involved. The chief role seems to have been played by Fouché, who, since the execution of the Duke d'Enghien, felt sure about the character of the future monarch and had taken upon himself the task of elevating it upon the institutions of the Revolution. During the weeks that preceded the event, Talleyrand's only mission was to win recognition of the new Emperor. He obtained it from all the courts of Europe save that of the Tsar, who was increasingly hostile.

There is, nevertheless, reason to doubt that Talleyrand's role was so limited. For four years he had worked too hard to win supreme power for Bonaparte not to have been among those who, during the crisis of April and May, 1804, won such huge votes for the Empire from the Assemblies, the Tribunal, and the Senate. But he had that habit of haughty nonchalance which gave him the appearance of disinterestedness and detachment, as in Brumaire, year VIII. Among his intimates, he even was gently ironic about the grandiose conceptions of Napoleon's new power and ambitions. Of Napoleon, he said to Mme de Rémusat that "this combination of Roman republic and Charlemagne turned his head." With his famous "desire to please," he freely took up the "carolingian" ideas which were all the rage. When the new Emperor stopped his triumphal progress in August at Aix-la-Chapelle, Talleyrand wrote to him, "It seems both great and just that the city which was for so long the chief imperial city, . . . which was Charlemagne's residence, should blaze with the brilliance of your Majesty's presence, and should make plain the similarities which Europe has already recognized between the restorer of the Roman empire and the founder of the French empire."

Monarchical formulas flowed easily from his pen. Born to serve a "Majesty," he must have felt a certain joy in saying farewell to the hateful "Citizen." He himself became an "Excellency" twice over, for he remained a minister and also became Grand Chamberlain with the eagle of the Legion of Honor. He was not satisfied, however. Even though he had just been called "Citizen," "Excellency" did not seem very much to him. He wanted one of the newly created posts of great dignity, such as arch-chancellor or arch-treasurer, with their title of "Most Serene Highness." Perhaps the Emperor might have named him arch-chancellor of the State, but he could not overcome his repugnance to the thought of the former Mme Grand as "Her Highness." "His wife," scoffed a certain lady, "is the cause of his not being 'arch-ed.' They did not want her to be Her Most Highness . . . Oh, well. Sooner or later one has to pay for stupidity." He was doubly wounded by this disappointment, for though he still had the pride of his name, his birth, and his position, Talleyrand was ignored while Cambacérès and Lebrun became Highnesses. He got his revenge by scoffing at these parvenu lawyers in his usual disdainful manner. "I find that Most Serene Highness is really ridiculous when given to such dignitaries," he wrote to Stanislas de Girardin . . . "For those who have received more than five hundred Parisians at a louis per consultation, Highness has not its usual sense." This arrogant thrust is pure Talleyrand. He did not dream, however, of showing his spite to the master. But with his usual tenacity, he persisted in this ambition until 1807, when he finally persuaded the emperor to make him a dignitary and a Most Serene Highness.

The war with Austria

The eyes of the world were fixed on Paris. There reigned the master of fate, and, rightly or wrongly, Europe was convinced that the minister's advice was effective enough to determine or at least to influence his decisions. Everything was made easy for him, since he simply had to indicate the wishes of his master before whom everyone trembled.

We know Talleyrand's moderate ideas and his international preferences. He had, however, to take part in the war with England, which more than any other was contrary to his hopes. He also had to take part in the war with Austria, which did even more to destroy his plans. Yet to please Napoleon, he seemed to be most violent against England and then against Austria. His ravings against England were said to be those of a "madman," and as for Austria, he seemed to think she was falling to pieces. "A pile of trash," he exclaimed. In reality, he could have foreseen that such a war was inevitable from the day that Napoleon put on

the Italian crown and added new Italian lands, especially Genoa, to his Empire. It had taken all the resources of Talleyrand's subtle spirit to find a way to present such events to Austria as if they were very natural. He did not succeed, and the third coalition was formed, consisting of England, threatened with invasion, Russia, led on by Tsar Alexander's antipathy, and Austria. "M. de Talleyrand is in despair," wrote Lucchesini, "and if he could have or, if he still could, either prevent the crash or stop the course of events before success or defeat excites ambition or forces honor to continue, he would consider this circumstance one of the most glorious of his ministry." But once the die was cast, no matter how much he was in "despair" over the rupture, he proclaimed that the action of Austria fully justified new conquests. On September 23, Talleyrand read before the Senate the speech which had been prepared against Austria: "The Emperor will not lay down his arms until he has obtained full and entire satisfaction and complete security for his own States and for those of his allies." The minister wrote to Cobenzl's chancellery in his insolent style, "If your Emperor wants war, I daresay that he must not flatter himself into thinking of celebrating Christmas at Vienna." Indeed, by Christmas Francis II had been out of Vienna for a long time and had been forced into peace.

At the beginning of this new campaign, however, Talleyrand still had some hope for the triumph of his moderate ideas. He followed the Emperor on his way to Germany, but, leaving him to go on into Bavaria, he stopped at Mainz. At Mainz he sealed his master's alliance with the German states of Baden, Württemberg, and Bavaria, against Austria. He was disappointed in being unable to add Prussia to the list. He had certainly never liked Prussia, but since this war with Austria was inevitable, an alliance with Prussia seemed advisable. In the spring of 1803, he had threatened Berlin with a possible understanding with Vienna, which was what he secretly desired. "Our desire is for Prussia," he wrote to Laforest, the Prussian minister, on May 17, 1803, "may she not force us to seek out Austria." But in 1805, Paris could no longer be content with the more or less friendly but uneasy neutrality which Prussia had maintained since 1795 for the sake of gaining time. Talleyrand was obliged to plan an alliance with Prussia, since Napoleon preferred it to one with Austria. Since Prussia was known to be eager for greater power, she was teased with the prospect of substantial new acquisitions and of playing a great role with France's help. In order to cause a definite break with London, it was proposed that she annex Hanover, which had been taken over by the ruling house of England. But Prussia remained vague, not daring to break off with the other

thrones, not wishing to betray the Tsar's friendship, not wanting to alienate England forever, who might win, and not even wishing to risk the wrath of Austria. Prussia really wanted Hanover, but before any alliance was made, Talleyrand got angry. 'Let her (Prussia) remain in all her littleness," he wrote on October 17, 1805, "since she did not want to take advantage of this opportunity to elevate herself to greatness. Let her bear the consequences of her pusillanimity, and, left to herself, let her await the time and the chance for what she might have owed only to her foresight and courage." Was he really so disappointed? As Choiseul's disciple, he was really pleased with an attitude which he hoped would put an end to Napoleon's excessive indulgence for the nephews of Frederick II and would make him some day welcome conquered Austria with open arms.

The memorandum of October 17

Austria was already partly conquered by October 17 when Talleyrand seemed to consider the negotiations for a Prussian alliance closed. Shut up in Ulm by the gigantic operations which the Emperor had been conducting since September 27, Field Marshal Mack surrendered his half-destroyed army and Napoleon marched on to Vienna.

Talleyrand thought that the time had come to convince the Emperor of the policy which had been on his mind ever since the rupture with Austria, that is, a mild peace, opening the way to a firm alliance.

Perhaps still ignorant of the capitulation of Ulm but knowing that it was inevitable, he sent Napoleon a memorandum which is one of his greatest claims to foresight. He extolled not only moderation in victory, but also moderation based on a plan which he thought would be fruitful in its results.

In his opinion, Austria was more than ever the only power in Europe, besides France, which could upset the designs of Russia and England on the Ottoman Empire. She was also the only power which could be exasperated by the constant work of "diminution" which the Hohenzollerns were carrying on against the Hapsburgs in Germany. To win her over, she should be allowed to keep her provinces, or, if some of them were taken over to make her pay for her defeat, she should be given part of the Balkans, which the Russians were hankering after. It was necessary to preserve a strong Austria, and with careful handling, she could be made into a faithful ally. This new "reversal of alliances" would be a work of public welfare for Europe and would mean that the new French monarchy was taking up the policy conceived by the old. As a matter of fact, neither in the memorandum of October 17 nor in

the outline of a treaty to which it is attached is there anything precise about "Danubian compensations." A few days before, the minister had confided his whole idea which can only be glimpsed in the memorandum, to Hauterive, his right-hand man. "I should like to see the Emperor," he wrote, "the day after a great victory, which does not seem at all doubtful, say to Prince Charles, 'Here you are at bay, I do not want to take too much advantage of my victories. I wanted peace and what proves it is that I still want it today. The conditions of an understanding can no longer be the same as those which I should have proposed to you two months ago. Venice will be independent and will not be joined either to Italy or France. I shall give up the Italian crown, as I promised. Swabia, which is the subject of eternal quarrels between the Elector of Bavaria and you, will be returned to Bavaria or some such prince. I shall help you to get possession of Moldavia and Wallachia. On these conditions, I shall make an offensive and defensive treaty with you, and any idea of an alliance with Prussia can go to the devil. Do you want this within twenty-four hours? I consent. If not, beware of the good luck which belongs to a victorious army.' That's my dream this evening."

Only a part of these ideas is found in the memorandum of October 17 and, with more precision, in the *Project for a Treaty* to which it is annexed. If Austria would recognize the natural boundaries of France for once and for all, the Emperor of the French would agree "to acquire nothing . . . beyond the aforesaid boundaries." "He will renounce, both for his successors and himself, the crown of Italy, which will be forever separated from that of France on the condition that Austria will agree to recognize as King of Italy the successor whom the Emperor of the French will choose." The Emperor would retain only Genoa and the Piedmont beyond the Alps. Deprived of Venice, which would become independent, of Swabia and of the Tyrol, which the Emperor would give to his German allies, Austria, "like France, had to agree to acquire nothing beyond these new boundaries." Not a word was said about possible Austrian acquisitions along the Danube, for Talleyrand was simply trying to sound out Napoleon, and if he found him disposed to be magnanimous, then he could mention compensations.

To protect himself in case Napoleon did not accept his ideas, Talleyrand treated his memorandum as a "political novel," as he had called his confidence to Hauterive a "dream." The prudent minister did not intend to sacrifice his portfolio for the sake of these opinions, no matter how dear they were to him.

The Emperor received the memorandum at Munich at the moment when he was getting ready to march on Vienna. He seems to have considered the matter, and ordered Talleyrand, as he says in his *Memoirs,* to come to Munich for the express purpose of discussing the project.

Events took place in such a fashion, however, that Napoleon, carried away by his victory, was less and less inclined to be lenient. Talleyrand himself was undecided. He had to consider the consequences of the downfall of Austria. The chief one would be a new organization of Germany in which France would have a share because of her alliances with the princes of the south. "The best thing would be the complete disappearance of the Holy Roman Empire," he wrote. "Send me the outline," he wrote to Hauterive. "Three emperors in Germany, France, Austria and Prussia. No more Ratisbonne!" From Munich he followed the victorious march of the armies towards Vienna and then towards Olmütz, doubtless with some uneasiness even about the victories of the French armies. He no longer emphasized the advantages of leniency to the conquered, but assailed the conqueror with letters in which his flattery often assumed a caressing tone. He even found words to soften the blow of the catastrophe of Trafalgar, for when he wrote to tell Napoleon the news on November 12, he said, "Genius and good luck were in Germany." Judging by this light tone, one might think that the event roused only slight emotions in him. He felt very strongly, however, and wrote to Hauterive, "What horrible news from Cadiz! May it not be a hindrance to any of the political operations which seem suitable to me to undertake now." While studying the means of forming an alliance with Austria, he had not ceased to think of a reconciliation with England, his other favorite. But after a victory which definitely gave her control of the seas, would England be so tractable? And in reaction to such a disaster, would not the Emperor want to strengthen his continental empire more than before? Defeats as well as victory were working against a peace of conciliation.

The December 5 letter

He decided to leave for Vienna. The Emperor had already left the city, and had gone to finish the campaign against the united Russian and Austrian armies in the depths of Moravia. "I find that the Emperor is going very far," Talleyrand wrote to Hauterive. "He is forty leagues from Vienna. It seems to me that he ought to stop." At Vienna he found Giulay and Stadion, two Austrian plenipotentiaries, whom Napoleon, absorbed in his military operations, had sent away. They had spoken to him about mediation by Prussia. "What is Prussia doing here?" an-

swered Talleyrand. "Let us deal with each other." It would be to Austria's advantage not to encumber herself with Prussians or Russians, but she had to hurry up. The minister went to visit the Countess von Rombeck, sister of the two Cobenzls, and begged her to urge her brother to conclude the matter before a supreme defeat would make an easy peace impossible. But at the same moment, Austria had received the death-blow at Austerlitz, and Emperor Francis himself rushed to beg peace from Napoleon under the most detestable conditions.

As soon as he had been informed of the victory, however, Talleyrand made a supreme effort in behalf of this "moderate peace" which was the only possible basis for an alliance. He sent Napoleon a letter on December 5 in reference to his memorandum of October 17: "Your Majesty may now destroy the Austrian monarchy or raise it up. Once destroyed, it will never be even in your Majesty's power to pick up the remains and put them together in one unit. Now, the existence of this unit is necessary. It is indispensable to the future safety of civilized nations. The Emperor may destroy it, but, once destroyed, it will not be re-established. Let him preserve it, let him stretch out a generous hand, let him offer an alliance and let him make it both possible and sincere by making it profitable. France is great enough . . . If the Austrian monarchy is too much weakened in the west and has not the means to keep control over the states which she has maintained, the Hungarians, who are restless and turbulent in the name of independence and liberty, might abandon a flag that has been humiliated by continual defeats, and, too weak to form an independent state, might go over to the Russians, with whose customs their own have so many analogies. I have been informed by unsuspected channels that such projects have found many supporters in Hungary. Now the Russians, as masters of Hungary, would be all powerful in Europe. I beg Your Majesty to read over the plan which I had the honor to address to Him at Strassburg (October 17). Today more than ever I dare to consider it the best and most salutary. Your Majesty's victories would make it simple now."

The solution he suggested was worth examining. It is possible that if the Emperor had adopted it, Europe might have been on the way to a lasting peace. Talleyrand's secret rancor is explained by the fact that the plan was disdainfully tossed aside, almost without being examined, and completely disregarded.

Unfortunately, the letter found Napoleon in a most unfavorable mood, which was justified to an extent. Austria had been the earliest and the most obstinate enemy of the new France. Twice he had spared

this enemy, only to see her turn towards England, whom she had thus saved from invasion, and towards Russia.

Doubtless it would have been more politic to forget all about it for a third time, but the Emperor was not simply nursing a grudge. He had to recompense his German allies, make their states into powerful principalities, fortify Italy against any Austrian invasions like those attempted in 1798 and 1805 by the creation of more advanced boundaries, and, finally, set barriers against Austria from the Danube to the Illyrian mountains that would check her eternal desire for revenge.

The Emperor intended to diminish Austria's territory, not to degrade her but to weaken her forever, to enrich his German allies, to complete his Italian kingdom with Venice, and to take possession of the eastern coast of the Adriatic because of his Oriental projects. For the time being, Napoleon was unwilling to think of compensations for Austria in the Danube basin. After Austerlitz, he was already dreaming of conquering the Tsar, and was nursing the ideas which were to take form at Tilsitt.

Prussia and Austria

For the time being, Prussia benefited most by Napoleon's decision, another fact which was contrary to Talleyrand's wishes. She was, however, in a bad fix. Having declined an alliance with France, she had secretly joined with Russia in the Treaty of Potsdam on November 3. The King of Prussia had offered his "mediation" but in a fashion so inacceptable to Napoleon that he had declined it, a fact which permitted the Prussians to join the coalition. Prussia's armed intervention seemed so certain that the Tsar had counted on it for December 3, and had thanked Frederick-William effusively. Haugwitz, who had been sent to Napoleon to convince him to accept this pseudo-mediation, had prolonged matters simply to see what would happen. When he was presented to the Emperor at Brünn, he did not dare to make his proposal, so that Napoleon impatiently sent him away to Vienna, where Talleyrand quickly saw through him. "His mission," he wrote ironically to the Emperor on December 1, "will undoubtedly assume a more decided character in a few days."

Without knowing the terms of the Treaty of Potsdam, Napoleon had seen through this idea of "mediation," and, being determined to make Austria pay dearly for her defeat, he planned to profit from the confusion of Prussia only to the extent of imposing an onerous alliance upon her. At first he badly frightened the Prussian minister. "As we

speak together at this moment," he said, "M. de Talleyrand has perhaps signed a peace with Austria, and I am ignorant of what our future relations will be . . . Hope to see you again." Leaving him consumed with uneasiness, he finally did see him again, and declared that he had seriously considered an alliance with Austria, but that he had rejected it for certain reasons. Then he suddenly proposed an alliance to the Prussians on December 15, and they signed everything the Emperor wished.

The Peace of Pressburg

Talleyrand, however, was doubly disappointed by this action. When Austria had been "punished," Prussia was supposedly pardoned, and preparations were begun for dealing with Russia in the future. Napoleonic policy was thus taking on a slant that was calculated to conflict with every international sympathy as well as antipathy which Talleyrand felt. As always, he yielded, and agreed to be the spokesman at Pressburg for the Emperor's severe demands and the interpreter of conditions which were opposed to everything he had advised. The Austrian plenipotentiaries had to agree to great sacrifices of territory.

He signed the treaty without making any show of his displeasure, which was later revealed indirectly in a very minor way. When a monument was to be raised to perpetuate the Peace of Pressburg, Talleyrand asked the sculptor to include no image of him in the group. Such a fact indicated the bitterness he felt at the Emperor's forcing him to sign a disavowal of his favorite plans. Perhaps his hostility to Napoleon dated from this moment. Speaking of Talleyrand's opposition in 1808, Metternich said that the "party" of which he was the head "had been in existence since 1805." The *Memoirs* corroborate this statement. Talleyrand wrote that the rejection of the proposals which he made in October and December, 1805, determined him to resign from the Ministry and from the Emperor's service when he had the chance. He added that it was not so easy to give up one's position with Napoleon as one might think.

At any rate, for two years more, the minister was in the unusual situation of being a disapproving spectator of events which he seemed to direct.

16

THE PRINCE DE BENEVENT AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH ENGLAND

The princedom of Bénévent

"ALL THE foreign ministers are equally eager to visit him and pay him assiduous court," wrote the Austrian minister in reference to Talleyrand on April 3, 1806, "for matters have reached such a point here that the ministers share in the homage which everywhere and in every way is offered to the master who through good fortune and circumstance has reached a degree of power which is as considerable as it is astonishing . . . It is almost impossible to gain admission to M. de Talleyrand. A word of notice granted during a chance encounter is a fortunate event and the least courtesy in society is noticed and considered as a favor."

Baron de Vincent was in no way exaggerating the prestige of Napoleon's ministers, especially of the Minister of Foreign Relations. It seemed that Emperor wished constantly to increase this prestige and to pay for the forced sacrifices of Talleyrand's ideas by granting him unaccustomed favors, as he had formerly allowed him such lucrative profits.

In the spring of 1806 he showed him a mark of favor such as was received by few Frenchmen outside of his own family, for he granted him a princedom, with a semi-sovereign title, almost with a crown.

With his usual pride, Napoleon declared after Austerlitz that "the House of Naples had ceased to reign." Gouvion Saint-Cyr was sent to the Kingdom of Naples, and, meeting with almost no resistance, he occupied the southern part of the peninsula and drove out the Bourbons. As a first step towards the establishment of a federated Empire, which was soon to include many other states, the kingdom was given to Joseph Bonaparte. Besides these enfeoffed kingdoms, the Emperor had already conceived of some "princedom-fiefs," which were to be given to the great and privileged servitors of the Imperial Crown. Cambacérès and Lebrun became respectively Princes of Parma and of Plaisance. Two

"fiefs of the Empire," Bénévent and Ponte Corvo, were detached from the Kingdom of Naples; the latter was given to Marshal Bernadotte, mostly because he was Joseph's brother-in-law, and the other to Talleyrand on June 5. This was not simply a title of nobility, but a title of possession, "transmittable," as the decree read, "to his legitimate and natural male children after the law of primogeniture." Under the suzerainty of the Emperor of the French, the Prince had control of the government of his state, levied taxes, and had charge of conscription, directed the budget, and ordered public works; in brief, acted in all ways like a sovereign, except that he was enfeoffed.

The attempt to make peace with England

No one doubted that the event showed the persistence and even the increase of the Emperor's favor. Possibly at this moment Napoleon expected of him the great service of concluding peace with England, something which had never seemed so close to realization since the rupture of 1803.

I have elsewhere made a detailed study of this affair, the interest of which has long been disregarded by historians. Since nothing came of the matter, this interest is purely retrospective, but still great. In fact, I think that there was never such a good chance for the establishment of a general peace in Europe as in the summer of 1806. Fox, who had succeeded to Pitt, who had died in January, seemed willing and even inclined to work towards such an end. Whatever other historians, as M. Coquelle or M. Emile Dard, say, the Emperor agreed from the start that great concessions might be made to the enemy, especially in reference to the possession of Malta. Without hesitation, he even accepted the idea of restoring Hanover to the English royal family, despite the fact that Prussia would be greatly harmed by the loss of this state which France had ceded to her. Of course the Emperor did not intend to bear the whole burden of the reconciliation. He abandoned Malta to England, but he expected Sicily to come under the sway of his brother, Joseph, and if he gave Hanover to George III, it was only upon the condition that England would recognize once and for all the territories which France had acquired outside of its natural boundaries since 1803. Fox did not seem to think that these demands were insurmountable obstacles to the conclusion of a treaty, and Napoleon considered them simply as a foundation for the negotiations. The very fact that he entrusted the matter to Talleyrand seems to indicate that he really wanted to make peace.

Talleyrand had every reason in the world to bring the negotiations to

a satisfactory conclusion. When a letter from Fox started a correspondence, he put into it all the refined graces with which he could replace the insolence that he also knew how to display. He did not hide the joy which Fox's answers brought him. On the English side, however, there arose an objection which particularly vexed Talleyrand. Since England and Russia had a treaty of alliance, Fox thought that it would be treachery to treat without her, and, although Talleyrand wanted no delay, the English minister refused on April 8 to begin unless Russia were present as a third party. Since he disliked such collective negotiations, Napoleon refused to accept this condition, and his yielding upon this point was a minor success for his minister. The diplomatic corps knew all about the minister's ardor in this important matter. "M. de Talleyrand, who wants to leave public life," wrote Baron de Vincent to Chancellor Stadion, "makes it a point of honor first to succeed in concluding peace with England."

Russia, as well as Prussia, must have been informed about it. While the latter was vaguely uneasy over Talleyrand's unfavorable feelings towards her and kept her Parisian embassy on the alert, the Tsar, perhaps unaware of the conditions demanded by the loyal Fox, was afraid that he might be left out in the cold. He sent Baron Oubril to Paris, supposedly on some very limited mission, but actually to survey the Franco-English parleys. Delighted by the arrival of the Russian, Talleyrand intended to turn this suspicious visit into something advantageous to the peace. Pretending to regard Oubril not simply as an emissary but as a plenipotentiary, he literally took possession of him the minute he arrived, and, after showering him with flattering courtesy, in a few days he concluded with him a separate peace treaty which was signed on July 20 and was sent to Saint Petersburg for ratification. The barrier which Fox's scruples had set before the negotiations with Yarmouth suddenly disappeared. Fox was greatly "mortified" when he heard the news of "Oubril's treaty," but he was all the more inclined to treat himself. He then entrusted Yarmouth with full powers and sent over Lord Lauderdale, who had always been considered favorable to the restoration of Franco-British amity. Everyone thought that the peace was as good as concluded and Talleyrand took it for granted, when suddenly some very serious incidents called a halt to the negotiations.

Prussian agitation

These incidents were not caused by either of the two parties, but by Prussia. Lord Yarmouth, who was plied with liquor by Lucchesini,

confided the secret of the negotiation about which the latter had been brooding for three months. Lucchesini also learned in this manner that Napoleon was not simply thinking of but had agreed to the restoration of Hanover to the English royal family. Talleyrand did not conceal his antipathy for Prussia, on whom no one could rely, as he told Mme Rombeck, sister of the two Cobenzls. "Prussia, you believe in Prussia, Madame. We don't believe her. Prussia is neither for you nor for us; she is only for herself." Consequently, the Prussians interpreted everything that happened at Paris as suspicious or even hostile.

The Emperor, however, was looking for a way to deal with Prussia. He did not intend to give Hanover to England before he had found a rich compensation for Prussia, and when he announced the union of sixteen German princes under his suzerainty in a Confederation of the Rhine, he also tried to cajole the probable bad humor of the Prussian cabinet by informing it through a confidence of Talleyrand to Lucchesini that "he would look favorably upon Prussia's grouping of what remained of the small German states, and on that occasion, the House of Brandenburg would put on the imperial crown." Prussia seems to have considered this talk only as a trap to make her break with Austria forever, and when Lucchesini made Lord Yarmouth's confidences known in Berlin, a sort of panic was aroused which set loose such hostility against France that war suddenly seemed imminent.

Negotiations with England lagged. Certain historians place the blame upon the Emperor, who, in opposition to his minister, had never seriously considered peace with England. Actually, he did not despair until he learned of Fox's death on September 15—"one of the fatalities of my career," he said at Saint Helena. The negotiations went on, but against the will of those whom the dead minister had had to persuade in the first place. When these persons came into power in London and saw a new chance to find allies on the continent, they dragged matters out with the intention of breaking off the discussions. This was the procedure of Lord Lauderdale, who had formerly been favorable to the conclusion of peace. Since Prussia was obviously preparing to declare war, the British representatives adopted a gruffer tone. Events were rushing on, and the Tsar, being assured of new support, refused to ratify Oubril's treaty. Talleyrand's patiently constructed edifice crumbled away, and the Emperor sadly wrote to him on September 12, "I can have no real alliance with any of the great powers." Such was indeed the truth, and even Talleyrand had to admit it. Perhaps if he had felt free to express himself, he might have reminded the master that in 1805 he had suggested a way to form a real alliance with Austria but that his idea had

been rejected. As for the Prussian alliance, he had reason to say that he had never encouraged it nor counted on its realization. It was amusing to see the Emperor's annoyance at Talleyrand's over-friendly relations with the Prussian agent, who, he said, had lured him on—"because nothing is easier than deceiving you," as he added bitterly.

Talleyrand is uneasy

Talleyrand had not been "deceived." He had not only made up his mind to the rupture with Prussia, but had also felt pleasure in seeing the end of this *rapport* which for ten years had meant nothing but a series of mishaps. He was saddened only by the conclusion which the Emperor himself drew from the event. Talleyrand agreed that Napoleon could have "no real alliance with any of the great powers," and perhaps not even any lasting peace. Already he sought means to put himself on a good footing with the sovereigns of Europe, so that when Napoleon's downfall did come, he would be able to save himself and his fortune by becoming an arbiter of fates in his turn.

17

TALLEYRAND IN POLAND

The Prussian War

TALLEYRAND was convinced that Prussia deserved to be taught a lesson, especially for destroying the possibilities of peace. For once the minister was not displeased to see a "series of successful battles." When the Emperor left him in Mainz to march on to Saxony, he wrote to congratulate him on his overwhelming victories: "For a long time Your Majesty has exhausted the powers of admiration; our love and our gratitude are inexhaustible . . ." He left Mainz to rejoin the Emperor at Berlin for a discussion of the situation created by these new triumphs.

Strangely enough, conquered Prussia placed all her hope in Talleyrand, even though it was well known that he had never been favorably disposed to Franco-Prussian amity. In the hysterical fright resulting from a terrible defeat and from the Emperor's wrath, the Prussian cabinet believed only in the worst and would have sold its soul to the devil. "Provided that M. de Talleyrand has come," Haugwitz wrote to Lucchesini in Berlin, "I do not despair that you may succeed in giving rise to ideas less impolitic than this terrible principle of the destruction of Prussia as a guarantee of peace for France. This minister will easily understand that once Prussia has been made incapable of controlling Russia and of over-ruling Austria, or of at least acting as an intermediary, these two powers will find more ways to trouble the repose of France, no matter how powerful she may be, and that the only way to deal with such a situation is for Prussia to unite with the Germanic league and with France." This was a desperate and vain effort to escape the consequences of the defeat at Jena, for after this battle Napoleon was even less inclined to deal gently with Prussia than he had been with Austria after Austerlitz.

After the extraordinary series of events to which almost the whole Prussian army and the Hohenzollern monarchy had succumbed in less than forty days, the Emperor was at the height of his glory. Though Prussia was conquered, there was still Russia, who was already sending

armies into Poland. The Emperor had no doubt that he could finish her off in a few months, and that once peace had been established on the continent, he could bring all his force to bear against England, who would soon have to beg for mercy. Even before dealing with the Russians, he intended to build up a great war-machine, a continental blockade, that would bring England to her knees.

Nothing could be more foreign to Talleyrand's ideas of international policy than this colossal project. There is no better measurement of his determined resignation than the fact that he accepted the whole plan, and agreed to sign the report on this gigantic and extravagant enterprise. In fact, the decree establishing the continental blockade, as well as the report which justified it, were published under his name on November 22. As usual, he contented himself with slipping in a word or two that he thought might one day be interpreted as a condemnation of the measure. Speaking of the establishment of free ports, which he said had been violated by the English, he added, "This freedom, born of civilization, has encouraged its progress. Europe owes to it the maintenance and the growth of its prosperity, even in the midst of the frequent wars which have divided it." Thus once again Talleyrand provided himself with an alibi, for the sentence could be turned against the blockade.

The Emperor had not ordered him to Berlin simply to have him sign this decree, but also to discuss with him the necessity of going into Poland to find the Russian army and of forcing the Tsar to submit.

The Polish question

The most pressing problem was that of Poland. Poland had been definitely eliminated from the list of states only twelve years before. Torn in pieces by Russia, Prussia, and Austria in 1772, 1793, and 1795, she had finally disappeared from the map of Europe. Napoleon had often expressed his sympathy with the Poles as well as his bitter regret that the "Northern empires" had been allowed to increase at the expense of the ruined country and had consequently destroyed the balance of power in Europe at the expense of France herself. But even when he had become the leader of the French nation, it was a long time before he thought that he might become the liberator and restorer of Poland.

Opinions on Poland

The Emperor was too much of a realist to give way blindly to a feeling or to submit to a tradition without weighing it. The consequences of the restoration of the Polish state for France had to be considered. Because of her conquest of Prussia, France could liberate that part of Poland

which was situated on the banks of the Vistula and which, along with Warsaw, had passed into Prussian hands in 1795. But if a whole third of the former state were brought back to life, the Poles, some of whom had become subjects of the Romanovs and others of the Hapsburgs, could be led to regain their liberty. To promise it to them or even to allow them to hope for it would mean a serious decision for France, since it would alarm Austria and exasperate Russia. At this time the Emperor wished neither to alarm Austria nor exasperate Russia, for since the destruction of the Prussian alliance, he had to find another to help him against England and thought that he could find it only in Vienna or Saint Petersburg. Would the reconstitution of Poland offer any compensation for the sacrifice of such important and pressing interests?

It was chiefly about this urgent question that Napoleon wished to consult Talleyrand. He wanted him to go along to Poland, to gather information, and to offer him a well-founded opinion.

At first Talleyrand seemed, like Napoleon, to be willing to restore Poland. At Berlin on November 18, he asked the French ambassador to Austria, General Andreossy, to find out if Austria would accept Silesia, which Frederic II had taken away from Maria Theresa fifty years before, in exchange for Galicia, her share of Poland. If Galicia were joined to Posnania and the Warsaw district, then Poland would be rebuilt without putting Austria into a rage. France would kill two birds with one stone, since enriching Austria by despoiling Prussia would make the two countries enemies again and would set them at sword's points for a long time. As far as Talleyrand was concerned, since he cared no more for Russia than he did for Prussia, it would even be killing three birds, because when Austria consented to trade her part of Poland for Silesia, Russia's wrath would be of no importance. Talleyrand was so sure that Austria would agree to such an arrangement that he even thought it might result in an alliance, and thus turn Napoleon from his plans for an alliance with Russia. Consequently, he sent the Emperor a long report on January 28, 1807, which was most favorable to the reconstitution of Poland. Echoing the words of Choiseul at Chanteloup, he stigmatized the ministers of Versailles for failing to oppose the first partition, a failure which he called "the most unpardonable because the most deadly of the former royal government."

His visit to Warsaw

Napoleon and Talleyrand were in Warsaw from December 19 on. Received with cheers by the masses, Napoleon was living in a whirl of

fêtes given for him by Polish society, which was intoxicated with joy and love. Talleyrand made the Radziwill mansion, where he was staying, the center of these gala affairs, to which were invited the great soldiers of the Empire and the most brilliant Polish patricians. During one of these parties, he literally threw the charming Countess Maria Waleska into Napoleon's arms. It had always seemed deplorable to him that Napoleon had never kept a mistress, for he thought that a young, sentimental, loving woman, not given to intrigues, would sweeten his harsh character and perhaps ease his ever-growing need for action and conquest. He did more than anyone to overcome Maria Waleska's initial resistance, to ease her scruples, to conquer her remorse. "It was Talleyrand," Napoleon said rather brutally at Saint Helena, "who procured Mme Waleska for me."

The Emperor was enchanted, for his minister had never rendered him so many services. Talleyrand had become the center of Polish social life and continued with his inquiry in his own fashion, for by hearing the confessions of the women, he learned about the men. Napoleon left him behind in Warsaw as a sort of superior factotum who saw to everything, especially the maintenance of the army in regard to supplies and recruiting. During the difficult campaign of 1807 along the lower Vistula, Napoleon wrote to him, "Send me rice and cognac especially," and the high born Prince de Bénévent answered that "every day the baking of biscuits exceeded 3,000 rations" and gave an account of his "stores" of flour and wine. While fulfilling these duties, he continued to fulfill his social mission, and since Warsaw had sent her most brilliant cavaliers to join the newly-formed Polish army, he "applied [himself] to the consolation of the ladies."

18

AN AUSTRIAN OR A RUSSIAN ALLIANCE?

Russia or Austria?

OFFICIALLY Talleyrand had simply the one mission of seeing that Austria observed the strictest neutrality until the end of the campaign. In the last week of December, 1806, the Emperor had encountered the Russians and had forced them to retreat only after the most severe and murderous battles. The Russians had shown themselves to be not simply good soldiers, but savagely brave and bloodthirsty fighters. "When a Russian is killed," Napoleon said, "you still have to push him before he falls over." The engagements at Pultusk and Golymin, coming so close upon the Prussian war, left the French army in a bad state, aggravated by the severe climate and unprecedented miseries which foreshadowed the terrible campaign of 1812 in Russia. Fortunately, the enemy, too, suffered cruel hardships and was finally beaten. Napoleon did not hide the fact that nothing could be done against the Russian armies before summer, and with this in mind, he had reorganized and strengthened his battered armies with reinforcements. But if, in the meantime, Austria were convinced by England and Russia to try to take revenge for Austerlitz, he would be in a perilous situation.

"The end of all this," the Emperor wrote to Talleyrand, "will be an alliance between France and Austria, or France and Russia . . . I have proposed it to Austria several times; I still propose it to her."

The Vincent mission

Baron de Vincent was sent as an ambassador to Warsaw by Count Stadion, director of the Austrian chancellery. The pretext of his mission was that he had come to greet the Emperor of the French, whose victories were leading him within the confines of the Hapsburg emperor. Napoleon received Vincent on the ninth and showed him all the cordiality of which he was so capable when he wished. "We shall end by making an alliance," he said, to the Austrian's astonishment.

Though he wanted such an alliance himself, Talleyrand must have

thought that Napoleon was going too fast by actually soliciting it. Since the Emperor was also secretly thinking of a possible alliance with Russia, the minister did not hesitate to use this fact as a means to impress the Austrian. He also pointed out that this accord with Russia might lead to the reconstruction of Poland. Charles Dalberg, who was henceforth one of Talleyrand's best helpers, went to discuss the matter with Vincent. Why, by agreeing to trade Galicia for Silesia, which had fallen into Napoleon's hands along with all the Prussian states, could not Austria facilitate the restoration of Poland? In short, Vincent was convinced that it was up to him to make Napoleon abandon this idea of a Russian alliance, which could have such disastrous consequences as far as Austria's oriental plans were concerned. When Talleyrand received the ambassador on the twenty-fourth, he proposed an alliance to him in the most clear-cut terms and asked him to obtain full powers from Vienna and the authority to sign an alliance.

Vincent hesitated. The Russian army, reformed by Benningsen, was prowling around the French encampments. The December engagements had impressed everyone with the army's strength. Benningsen suddenly attacked on January 19, and threatened to surround the surprised Grand Army. The Emperor hastily left Warsaw on the twenty-second, attacked and repelled the Russians, but did not really hurl them back until February 8, after the dreadful battle of Eylau. Even then, the bloody victory was not really decisive.

All Europe, and especially Austria, was terribly upset by the news of Eylau. While the Emperor was marching against Benningsen, Talleyrand had seen Vincent again and had urged him on more than ever. Right after a decisive victory over the Russians, Austria would not find the Emperor so favorably inclined towards an alliance with her; it must be concluded before these great blows were struck. After Eylau, Talleyrand grew more insistent. "You wish to change the state of things by war," he said. "Why do you not try peace? France must be led back to social principles, must be given the time to refine herself . . . Tardiness is out of place: the Emperor is completely alone at this moment." That is, the place of Napoleon's great ally was vacant, but only for the moment. "His constant opinion," Vincent wrote to Stadion, "can always be reduced to the same axiom: that only the alliance of two great powers can give peace to Europe." As far as Austria was concerned, if the alliance were made without her, it would be made against her.

Stadion still hesitated. He did not dare accept an alliance with "Bonaparte" in the face of all Europe. Francis II had a long way to go until the day when he would give his daughter to this "Bonaparte." But

Austria pretended to want to do him a service. As if Eylau had really been a setback for Napoleon, Stadion offered mediation. A congress would meet to establish peace on a basis acceptable to all, and England would be invited to send a representative. Talleyrand accepted, even though he knew that the Emperor would not agree to such a congress, but it was important not to give Austria an absolute refusal in order to keep her neutral. He profited by this respite to assail Vincent again. "Try out peace with the Emperor; you have no other enemy to fear but him." Talleyrand deliberately sacrificed Poland, since he saw that Austria, as well as Russia, was determined to oppose her restoration. In fact, he had gradually freed himself from these troublesome alliances. He now judged severely what Caulaincourt called the "Polish mania" of the Imperial circle. "I detest that country," he said to Vincent. "I have seen nothing more frivolous and inconsequential than those people. They combine all the dangerous qualities of the other countries." From this time until Tilsitt, he constantly criticized the "Polish dream," which he had once accepted.

Talleyrand's uneasiness

To tell the truth, ever since Eylau, Talleyrand had been so troubled that he had again detached himself from all of Napoleon's great "dreams," by which he had actually been seduced very rarely. After Jena, he must have repeated that a "series of fortunate victories" would establish no firm foundation. He saw Napoleon personally throwing himself into these murderous, bloody combats. He knew that in such moments the great man, as if he thought himself invulnerable as well as invincible, freely exposed himself, and escaped the cannon balls and the bullets only by a miracle. Conqueror or conquered, what would happen to him if he were mortally wounded? Talleyrand knew that the whole Empire, which had been built so hastily, rested on his shoulders alone. With the news of such an accident, the whole of Europe would rush upon the conquered lands, then across the new boundaries of France, and perhaps even across her former frontiers.

According to several witnesses, it seems that the Prince de Bénévent had taken a few precautions before Eylau. He placed a trusted officer at the Emperor's side, so that he could quickly be informed in case of an accident. In such an event, a courier, who was ready day and night, would have immediately dashed to Naples to find Joseph and to take him to Lyons to be proclaimed Emperor. Talleyrand would have gone in person to Vienna to persuade the Austrian government to recognize the new Emperor, to form an alliance against Russia, and to begin

negotiations for the general pacification of Europe by means of the immediate restitution of the provinces taken from the Hapsburgs by the Treaty of Pressburg, perhaps even the abandoning of Italy by France. Rejoining Joseph at Lyons, Talleyrand would then have taken him to Paris to make his entry the day that peace was proclaimed.

The "minister of peace"

Talleyrand was not the master, but neither was he displeased that Napoleon's weary and discontented followers thought that he alone was capable of leading the master. He knew the vanity of such thoughts, and realized also that the Emperor could begin to negotiate a treaty only after a great victory that would remove the effects of Eylau. Perhaps he was certain that Napoleon would finally win out, but he was doubtful of what the aftermath of that victory would be if he had not convinced Austria to take the great step of forming an alliance. As the Russians displayed their military power, the Emperor grew more confirmed in his desire for an alliance with the Tsar, and was less interested in dealing with Austria, but nevertheless he let Talleyrand negotiate with Vincent. The minister became even more insistent with Vincent, but Austria missed her one opportunity. Talleyrand's real cry of rage after Friedland showed the sincere passion with which he had conducted these negotiations.

In the meantime, Napoleon had begun to grow uneasy about Talleyrand's presence in Warsaw. If he had been kept there all spring, it was only because he continued to render services of all sorts, especially in regard to the maintenance of the army. "Beating the Russians, if I have bread, is child's play," the sovereign wrote to him. Talleyrand worked wonders. In May the Grand Army, which had been reorganized and enlarged, no longer knew the privations which had so aggravated its misery during the previous winter. It was with the Emperor's consent, moreover, that Talleyrand negotiated for the basis of Austrian mediation, deciding upon Prague as the future seat of the Congress. Was the Emperor distrustful of the role his minister was playing? Certainly he did not suspect the least infidelity, and, moreover, felt himself strong enough to ignore intrigues. At about this time, a certain witness heard a curious statement. When the minister was exclaiming about an agent's infidelity, Napoleon clapped him on the shoulder and said, with a meaningful glance, "That's nothing at all, Talleyrand. If I were betrayed fifteen times a day, that would not keep me from marching ahead."

In any case, the Emperor decided finally that it would be better to

keep an eye on this man who held a court at Warsaw and almost controlled a government. While preparing the summer campaign at Finkenstein, the Emperor resumed his government of the Empire from this Polish village. He called Talleyrand to him. He had to call off his conversations with Vincent, but they parted on terms which said a great deal for their good understanding of one another. "He promised," Vincent wrote to Stadion, "to inform me as well as he was able of all that happened on the lower Vistula."

What happened was Friedland on June 17, the crushing defeat of the Russians, their disordered retreat to Niemen, and the encounter at Tilsitt.

Talleyrand congratulated the Emperor as soon as he had been informed of the victory, but in the midst of his usual flattery he inserted a serious warning which revealed his uneasiness about the whole campaign. Praising the great victory, he wrote, "I like to think of it as the last one which Your Majesty will be forced to win. For that reason it is dear to me; for, splendid as it is, I must declare that it would lose more in my sight than I can say if Your Majesty had to march on to new battles and to expose himself to new perils about which my attachment is all the more alarmed because I know how much Your Majesty disdains them."

Actually, he felt real wrath against Austria for not having foreseen the consequences of the Russian defeat. Hearing from Vincent that Austrian mediation had been accepted by the adversaries of France, Napoleon replied that the time for it was past. "You are better gentlemen that the Russians, and I leaned towards you because you are Europeans." Which was another way of saying that the Russian alliance would win out. Talleyrand thought that this Russian alliance would establish no reasonable order in Europe. The two powers would divide Europe by bending the other states to their will, and a balanced world was not to be remade in this way. "Has it at last been found that the misfortunes of Europe have lasted long enough?" he wrote bitterly to Dalberg. And in writing to Vincent and the Chancellery of Vienna, he added, "I do not know where common sense has taken refuge." He was still prudent, however, and he contented himself with expressing most coldly, even to Vincent, "a real distress at an event (i.e., the Russian offensive which ended in the defeat at Friedland) which had just destroyed the means of pacification for which they had worked for several months."

Talleyrand at Tilsitt

Talleyrand had to seem to work for the Russian alliance, though he disliked and even feared it. Everyone hoped that Napoleon, who was about to approach Alexander, would first see and consult Talleyrand, without whom the peace might not even be made. "What a figure you cut here, my dear Prince," Caulaincourt wrote when he arrived at Tilsitt. "Peace would perhaps be the price of so much glory and fatigue." There was general joy when it was learned that the Emperor had ordered the minister who had such prestige to come to Tilsitt. "The less one finds pacific dispositions (in Napoleon)," someone wrote, "the more the minister of peace is desired here." No one doubted that he alone was capable of producing a lasting treaty from the Emperor's wishes. "I hope," General Clarke wrote from Berlin, "that the peace which Your Highness will have made when this letter arrives will be of long duration."

Caulaincourt was wrong on the eve of Tilsitt when he doubted the Emperor's "pacific dispositions." On the contrary, Napoleon had never so hoped to return to Paris with a treaty of peace and a treaty of alliance as well. Clarke was also wrong in assuming that the Emperor would let Talleyrand arrange all the details. Since Austerlitz, and especially since Jena, the Russian alliance had been Napoleon's own idea, and he knew very well that his minister did not enjoy the prospect of it. He thought that the alliance of these two Empires, the greatest in Europe, in the Occident, and in the Orient, would give England pause and influence her to make a treaty. Napoleon was ready to sacrifice a great deal to this idea. This time he demanded nothing of the vanquished, but, on the contrary, made possible the realization of all the ambitions which the Tsars had cherished for three generations: Finland, taken from Sweden, would make Russian influence felt in Scandinavia; Moldavia and Wallachia would bring Russia closer to Constantinople. He was even ready to sacrifice the reconstitution of the Kingdom of Poland, and, at any rate, the Tsar was assured that the part of Poland which had come under his rule would never be taken away. Thus the Polish state shrank simply to the piece taken away from the Hohenzollerns. In fact, it was Napoleon's idea to make Prussia pay at Tilsitt for the whole conquered coalition.

Such ideas could not jibe with Talleyrand's. How often had this disciple of Choiseul and of Vergennes, this *grand seigneur* of such exquisite refinement, spoken disdainfully of those "Russian barbarians," whom he would have thrown out of Europe into which they had un-

fortunately entered because of the partition of Poland. How often did he still show his contempt for this people, a troop of Asiatics intermixed with Slavs, of whom he did not hesitate to say, even to the Tsar, "The Russian people is not civilized." Despite apparently friendly relations with Alexander, he never slackened his opposition to the establishment of Russian hegemony in Eastern Europe. If the Ottoman Empire had to fall some day, he preferred to see his Austrian friends find a foothold in the Balkans, and he hated to give the "Muscovite barbarians" an open path to Constantinople, since there had been a traditional alliance between the French and the Sublime Porte for three centuries.

Actually, Talleyrand was pleased to see the sudden appearance of difficulties which were likely to cool off the warm friendship which seemed to have been formed between Napoleon and Alexander at their first meeting. "It seems, according to the Russian officers, that their Emperor insists upon, at least for honor's sake, the re-establishment of Prussia as such," wrote Caulaincourt to Talleyrand on the eve of the interview. Talleyrand, however, knew that Napoleon was so unwilling to re-establish Prussia "as such" that he had "at first determined to strike her off the list of powers." And Talleyrand would not be the one to hold him back. Besides the fact that he had never been favorably disposed towards the Prussians, he perhaps saw in this fact a way to upset things at Tilsitt. Goltz wrote to Hardenberg on July 2 from Tilsitt that he had received a letter from Talleyrand which left him with some hope. "He is the only man who can be useful to us. I would go through fire to win the confidence of the Duke (*sic*) de Bénévent." But the "Duke" de Bénévent would not lift a little finger in Prussia's behalf. Rather would he urge Napoleon to sacrifice her, if only to cast gloom on the Tilsitt "honeymoon." But Alexander abandoned his Prussian allies so quickly that the "honeymoon" was untroubled.

At Tilsitt, more than on any previous occasion, Talleyrand had to resign himself to being a mere performer. Together with Prince Kourakine, himself the simple servitor of Alexander's wishes, he had only one task: to write up what the two sovereigns decided upon during their most cordial conversations. Once again he signed a document that was the opposite of his ideas. The failure of his last attempt to found the balance of power in the new Europe upon a Franco-Austrian alliance had cut him off from that imperial phantasmagoria which was so contrary to common sense.

PART THREE

SEMI-RETIREMENT
1807-1814

19

DEPARTURE FROM THE MINISTRY

Resignation or dismissal?

"I LEFT the ministry as I wished," Talleyrand wrote, and he was so determined to convince posterity that he often returned to the reasons which made him abandon his important and lucrative post at a date upon which he had fixed. He had kept it, he declared, as long as Napoleon, "whom I loved," had been open to the opinions which it was his duty to present to him. "As soon as I saw him beginning the revolutionary enterprises which ruined him," he wrote, "I left the ministry, for which he never pardoned me." But at Saint Helena, in speaking of Talleyrand the Emperor said to Las Cases, "He is a talented man, but nothing can be done with him except by paying him. The Kings of Bavaria and of Württemburg made so many complaints to me about his rapacity that I deprived him of his portfolio." But in 1812, Napoleon said to Caulaincourt, "Why did he want to leave the ministry? He would still be minister if he had wished it." Savary, moreover, declares that the Emperor was "much vexed" by this departure. Metternich was completely astonished and echoed the general surprise: "Through indolence, M. de Talleyrand is leaving at the moment when all sorts of advantageous transactions are going to take place." Talleyrand's latest historian, Emile Dard, writes, "If there is one thing with which one cannot reproach him, it is with abandoning the Emperor in his downfall, for he parted from him at the height of his glory."

The question is perplexing. The action is so unlike what we know of Talleyrand's character that it almost seems unlikely and if one were convinced that the retirement was voluntary, one would be as astonished as Metternich. The motive which Talleyrand himself offers has surprised all those who have studied his career. "As soon as I saw him beginning the revolutionary enterprises which ruined him . . ." That is to say, Talleyrand would have left a master "whom he loved" as soon as he ceased to lend himself to his opinions. Now ever since 1803, beginning with the annexation of the Piedmont (which Talleyrand later

called "a monstrous violation of the most sacred aspects of the right of nations"), the Emperor had clearly been engaged in this career which, the minister predicted, "would have no end." He had had only a series of disappointments as far as his own ideas were concerned. But at no moment, though his advice and his suggestions were constantly disregarded, rejected, and contradicted, did he offer his resignation.

It may be answered that after the Treaty of Pressburg, there were signs that he had decided to do so. "M. de Talleyrand, who wishes to leave public life . . . ," wrote Vincent to Stadion at the time of the negotiations with England in 1806, and Floret, Austrian *chargé d'affaires,* wrote at about the same time that "Talleyrand ardently wishes to retire from a position which can no longer tempt his ambition and the burden of which bows him down." But for a long time, from the beginning of the Consulate, he had played at being the hopeless servant of his master's policy until he had convinced the diplomatic corps, as early as 1803, that he had offered his resignation or at least was going to. But he stayed on, swallowing his disappointments, consenting to make threats, to endorse executions, to sign reports which he secretly denied and treaties of which he disapproved. He remained because the ministry was such a source of wealth that it poured floods of gold into his coffers.

It is easy to establish the truth by examining the facts. Talleyrand did not want to leave the ministry, and the Emperor, no matter how he might have been tempted to part with him on several occasions, would not have done so if Talleyrand himself had not given him a reason or a pretext to withdraw his portfolio.

Talleyrand wants to be a "dignitary"

Talleyrand was puffed up with pride when he came back from Poland. He had not really had much to do with the negotiations at Tilsitt, but still everyone thought that he had had great influence on his master. After Friedland, everyone from Caulaincourt to Clarke had called upon him as the only man capable of making the Emperor bring peace to Europe.

Napoleon himself seemed to hold him in no less esteem. There is no need of Mme de Rémusat's testimony on this point, since it might be suspect because of her great friendship for Talleyrand. The letters exchanged during the Polish campaign between the Emperor and his factotum at Warsaw show almost unheard-of confidence in one, and a great desire to keep it in the other. Napoleon was especially grateful to him for having succeeded in maintaining Austrian neutrality which

had been of such great use and which had perhaps saved him. In short, when Napoleon saw Talleyrand again at Tilsitt, he could do nothing but receive him with open arms. It was under such happy circumstances that the Prince returned to Paris.

He was not the man to be paid off with smiles, however, even though they were those of a difficult master. Though he was a minister placed greatly above his colleagues and though he had received new millions along with a sovereign princedom, he did not think that he had been sufficiently recompensed for his services. He had nourished a secret hurt since 1804, when he had been unable to become a high dignitary. It seemed to him that the time had come to win, as sanction of his merits, what he had once been unable to obtain. He made a formal solicitation for title of "grand dignitary."

Talleyrand as Vice-Grand Elector

The Emperor was most vexed, for he had decided that the same man could never hold one of these great posts, which were permanent, along with a portfolio. He intended to keep his ministers under his thumb and not to create too great distinctions among them. Now he had often shown some slight inclination to dismiss Talleyrand because of his scandalous money-grabbing, but he seemed finally to have decided to retain him. This explains his saying to Caulaincourt that "he still would be minister if he had wished it." The Emperor explained himself most clearly to Caulaincourt a while later: "It was his mania for grandeur which made him leave the ministry. He wanted to be a great dignitary, and Arch-Chancellor of State above all, which, in his opinion, would have given him the ruling voice in political affairs."

Since Talleyrand was insistent, the Emperor decided to give him partial satisfaction, but intended to make him pay for it with his portfolio. Two of these great dignitaries had been out of France for several months since they had become kings: Joseph, the Grand Elector, and Louis, the High Constable. Napoleon did not intend to deprive these kings of titles which bound them so closely to the imperial system. Instead of relieving them of their duties, which had become merely honorary as far as they were concerned, he would create a Vice-Grand Elector and a Vice-High Constable, who would enjoy the rank of great dignitary and would perform the functions of the offices, which were really almost non-existent. Talleyrand was named Vice-Grand Elector ("The only vice he lacked," jeered the virtuous Fouché) and Berthier, who was then Minister of War, Vice-High Constable. The Emperor immediately recalled the portfolios which the two new dignitaries held.

Talleyrand thinks himself disgraced

Talleyrand was most displeased. Until the last moment he hoped that the Emperor would allow this plurality of offices, and his vanity was only half satisfied with this "vice-grand electorate." In vain was the enticing sum of 500,000 livres per year added to the official income of the Grand Chamberlain. In vain did the Emperor, in his message to the Senate, represent the promotion as "an outstanding sign of satisfaction" that he wanted to give his minister "for the distinguished manner in which he had constantly promoted the direction of the foreign affairs of the Empire." In vain was he seated with Cambacérès and Lebrun in the chairs reserved for "Most Serene Highnesses" at a *Te Deum* in Notre Dame. He was too intelligent to be satisfied with these honors, even though they brought with them an income of a half million. Since he thought that the Emperor was not enough of a slave to rules, especially to those which he had made himself, not to have been able to have him keep his portfolio if he wanted to, he admitted that Napoleon had seized a pretext to dismiss him. Consequently, he considered his elevation in rank as a thinly disguised disgrace, and as an indication that his master wanted to remove him from European affairs. He affected lofty serenity and said to Mme de Rémusat that "with all his faults the Emperor is still very necessary to France today, for he knows how to uphold her and each of us ought to do all he possibly can." He was embittered because he thought that he had been made a fool of and his resentment inclined him to consider the policy which he had once thought most open to criticism as actually doomed.

"My little mind is hard put to persuade itself that what we are doing beyond the Rhine will last any longer than the great man who is ordering it," he wrote to Caulaincourt. "After him, no nation will consent to submit to another nation. The vigilant and vigorous hand of the Emperor preserves us from everything, but what will come after him? Nature does not produce two men of his stature." He had so far placed only a small share of the blame upon the Emperor's boundless ambition, but once he no longer had to try to control it, he was less restrained in proclaiming it dangerous and intolerable.

The prestige which surrounded Talleyrand made his critical attitude rather unbearable for the Emperor, but it would have been of less consequence if he had really been relegated to the duties of Grand Chamberlain and Vice-Grand Elector, which would have given him hardly any opportunity to do an ill turn. But Napoleon could never let an ability, especially a proved one, remain useless, and for a long time, ignorant of

the depth of Talleyrand's resentment, he continued to summon him officially to his councils. He informed him of affairs which were growing increasingly dangerous, involved him in the most delicate and serious negotiations, and thus not only increased his reputation but kept this man, whom resentment made doubly dangerous, in intermittent but frequent contact with Europe. "Napoleon's mistake," as Albert Sorel has justly written, "was to give him opportunities to be unfaithful." As soon as Talleyrand saw little cracks appearing and multiplying in the monument from which he had been only partially excluded, he took advantage of the "opportunities" he had to re-enter to enlarge these cracks into fissures. The great intrigue was to grow until the day in January, 1809, when his dealings, hardly noticed by the Emperor, would change his honorable dismissal in August, 1807 into a real "disgrace."

20

TALLEYRAND AND THE SPANISH AFFAIR

The "consequence of the system"

TALLEYRAND wrote rather mysteriously to Savary when he expressed the hope that Napoleon would abandon his "Polish project": "The Emperor has much more important business elsewhere which may enter into the peace treaty." And he added these equally enigmatic words: "What he plans is the reasonable consequence of his system."

This "important business" and "reasonable consequence of his system" was the substitution of a new dynasty for that of the Bourbons in Spain and the complete enfeoffment of that country to the Grand Empire.

As early as November, 1806, the Emperor had discussed the matter with Talleyrand in Berlin. Among the papers left in Potsdam by the fleeing Prussian king, he had just discovered a letter from the miserable Manuel Godoy, the sovereigns' favorite and all-powerful minister, which left no doubt about the "treachery" of the Spanish government in regard to France, her ally for six years. Napoleon had long considered this alliance a sufficient safeguard against any attack from the rear while he fought beyond the Rhine. The alliance certainly did not constitute a force, for Spanish "power" was in full decline under mediocre sovereigns, but this alliance, faithfully observed, seemed to be at least a security. The letter found at Potsdam allowed no more illusions on the subject, for in it Godoy assured the Prussian cabinet of his sympathy and revealed a plan to attack France in the rear and to join the coalition as soon as Napoleon lost his first battle in Germany. After receiving such a blow, the Emperor must have thought immediately of destroying not only Godoy but the dynasty which he involved in his felony. He had talked over the matter with Talleyrand at Warsaw and at Tilsitt, and continued to discuss it.

Talleyrand's denials

Talleyrand seems never to have advised against the overthrow of the Bourbons in Spain, though he claimed that he did. On the contrary,

from the very beginning he seems to have encouraged the Emperor in this new design more than in any other. When the affair turned out badly, he frequently declared that he had opposed the plan with all his power. In 1823, under the pretext of opposing intervention in Spanish affairs as suggested by Villèle, he arose in the Chamber of Peers and dared to proclaim that in 1807 he had put Napoleon on guard against it and even added that "disgrace had always been the fruit of his sincerity." Chateaubriand, who was present at the meeting as a peer of France, described this daring lie as leaving him divided between a "sort of dismay and a sort of admiration," as before "a man who had received the power of remaking or annihilating truth." Duke Albert de Broglie, who was also a witness of the scene, was also overwhelmed by the boldness of the imposture. "Too many people knew," he said, ". . . that M. de Talleyrand had by no means opposed the Emperor's designs on Spain . . . and that the Emperor had told him so before the whole Court without his daring to answer a word." He could not answer a word in 1809 because Napoleon had the proofs of his connivance, and he dared to lie boldly in 1823 because he had destroyed these proofs in 1814 along with many other documents.

Talleyrand's responsibility

He did not like the Bourbons. "It is a finished house," he said to Mme de Staël in 1795, and in 1806 he told Mme de Rémusat, "Madame, all this will be achieved (the establishment of a new throne) only when there will no longer be any Bourbon on a throne in Europe." Talleyrand said repeatedly, "Since Louis XIV, the crown of Spain belonged to the family which reigned in France, and there has been no regret for what the establishment of Philip V cost in treasures and in blood because it alone assured the preponderance of France in Europe. It is one of the best parts of the heritage from the Grand King, and the Emperor ought to gather up this entire heritage. He ought not to give up one single part of it."

Napoleon had other reasons of his own for subjugating Spain more severely. I have studied these reasons elsewhere and I have tried to show that he hesitated a long time, even though the temptation was very strong from the start. The former minister was a courtier, and no matter what he said later, he was above all eager to please whoever employed him. He saw here a fine opportunity to strengthen himself or to reestablish himself in the sovereign's favor and did not hesitate to present the coming usurpation as if it were profound statesmanship. Nothing could have been more flattering to Napoleon's pride than the connection

which Talleyrand imagined between him and Louis XIV. The Bonapartes were now the House of France, and the establishment of this new House of France in Spain simply meant following the example of the Grand King. If the Emperor were still hesitating in the autumn of 1807, this argument, which glorified his plan, would have been enough to whet his appetite.

Indeed, Talleyrand always denied that he urged the total eviction of the Bourbons. He wrote in his *Memoirs* that because of Godoy's suspicious attitude in the crisis of 1806–1807, he simply advised the occupation of Catalonia, which was enough to assure the security of France during a new war to the east of the Rhine. This is most improbable, and does not justify the airs Talleyrand put on when he spoke to Savary about "important business" and the "consequence of the system." Not only Pasquier, moreover, but Méneval, Roederer, Fouché, along with Napoleon, affirm that Talleyrand was much more daring in his suggestions and that, as a courtier or as a schemer, he furnished the plan itself, which the imprudent appeals of the Spanish princes and a series of disastrous events led Napoleon finally to adopt.

Unfortunately for Talleyrand, we have at least one letter from him, written three days after the Bayonne "assault," in which he tells the Emperor, "Everyone here marvels at the turn which events have taken, a turn so fortunate that it is impossible to hope for more."

Napoleon plans to compromise him

Napoleon, however, must have got wind of his former minister's double dealing, of which there is a glimpse in his words to Mme de Rémusat. He planned to compromise him. Talleyrand's letter of congratulation crossed the strange letter in which Napoleon told him that he was assigning the Château de Valençay as the residence (a euphemism for prison) of the Spanish princes and was giving him the role of chief jailer.

"I wish," the Emperor wrote, "these princes to be received with no outward ceremony, but decently, and that you do everything possible to entertain them . . . You could have Madame de Talleyrand come with four or five ladies. If the Prince of Asturia should become attached to some pretty woman of whom one can be sure, it will be by no means inconvenient, since it will make one more way to watch over him . . . As for your mission, it is honorable enough. To receive three illustrious persons to entertain them is completely in accord with the character of the nation and with that of your rank . . ."

The letter could pass for an extended sarcasm, but Talleyrand did not

take notice of the insults and seemed not to see them. ". . . I shall answer with all my care for the confidence with which Your Majesty honors me," he replied. "Madame de Talleyrand left last evening to give the first orders at Valençay . . ." His list of secret grievances was open, and each disgrace he endured was written down on it. Napoleon did not seem to suspect this. It was impossible, however, for him to have written this unbelievable letter without intending to humiliate Talleyrand, nor could he have read the answer without understanding all the resentment that was concealed in the "thanks" for the "confidence" with which he was "honored." He wanted Talleyrand, who was already said to be denying his participation in the Spanish affair, to be branded before the world by this offensive confidence, and because he did not rebel, he concluded that he had understood the lesson and had bowed his head.

21

THE BETRAYAL AT ERFURT

The genesis of the interview at Erfurt

VENGEANCE! Talleyrand immediately began to prepare the means for it at a more or less distant date, and, incredibly enough, he was given the opportunity by Napoleon himself.

On his return from Bayonne, Napoleon had stopped at Bordeaux, for on the way he had learned of Dupont's capitulation at Baylen which seemed to compromise his plans seriously. Spain, which was in complete upheaval, called all in question. Europe, formerly resigned to submission, was beginning to stir. The Emperor's friends were troubled, his allies disturbed, his enemies encouraged. England, to whom the Spanish insurgents had appealed, was already sending troops into the Peninsula and was trying to form a new coalition in Europe. Conquered Prussia was looking towards Austria which was arming for a revenge for Austerlitz. The Tsar, who ever since Tilsitt had been hard put to play the role of ally, adopted a most displeasing air of commiseration about the news from Baylen. The situation which had been created after Tilsitt was thrown into confusion. Since the Grand Army had withdrawn into Germany, the Emperor could not deal a crushing blow beyond the Pyrenees unless he had some security in his rear for at least six months. Austria had to be restrained for these six months, and could be, if the Tsar would undertake the task. Napoleon felt that his ally was giving way and planned to see him again, hoping to exercise the influence over him which he thought he had won at Tilsitt. Erfurt was the place of rendezvous, but he did not try to hide from himself the fact that Erfurt would not be Tilsitt, and that he would encounter great difficulties which only firmness and clever diplomacy could overcome. Since he had little confidence in Champagny, his new Minister of Foreign Relations, he thought only Talleyrand was capable of helping him out under the circumstances. Talleyrand would precede him to Erfurt and would pave the way for the negotiations. The Emperor was in a hurry. He called Talleyrand from Valençay to Nantes, told him of the plan, and he accepted the mission.

Talleyrand's feelings

He must have felt the greatest surprise at this offer. If any other man had received such a mark of confidence from the Emperor, his gratitude would have been so great that he would have forgotten all his grievances. But Talleyrand saw the gesture simply as a proof of prodigious blindness—a further proof, as he would have said. The Spanish affair was already turning out badly, and he thought that the Emperor had multiplied his blunders in the execution of this enterprise. He came to the conclusion that the government, and France and Europe as well, was going to wrack and ruin under this reckless leader. When would he fall? Tomorrow? The day after? In ten years? It made no difference. He would fall. But what would become of those whose fortunes were bound up with the regime? It would be prudent to cut oneself off from such a man, if not publicly, then at least in the eyes of his future conquerors, and, to this end, to make oneself known to them not as an enemy but as a secret helper.

Ever since his "disgrace," and perhaps even earlier, he had begun to carry out this plan. For at least two years certain European statesmen had known that they had a friend in Paris. Metternich, who was sent as an ambassador to Paris after Pressburg, was the first to know it. When Talleyrand left the Ministry, the Austrian expressed his regret, saying that the department of Foreign Affairs had lost "the source from which it most certainly stemmed." In fact, Talleyrand had been linking his actions for months to those of the ambassador, thus taking the first steps to establish a relationship that was to last for more than thirty years through all sorts of political vicissitudes.

Metternich and Talleyrand

These two men, who were to be stars of the first magnitude in Europe, felt that they were natural allies. Since Metternich consented to raise for Talleyrand the veil that hid his plans, Talleyrand did not hesitate at least to let him guess at his secret thoughts. They did not need long conversations to see into each other and to unite against the man who was troubling all of Europe. To be more precise, Talleyrand, guessing at what Metternich was preparing, felt more than ever convinced of the precariousness of the colossal edifice to which the Emperor was constantly building new additions.

When the Emperor entrusted him with the preparation of the talks at Erfurt, the Prince de Bénévent had no other thought but to wreck the plans of the man who placed such confidence in him.

Talleyrand goes to Erfurt

"My dear Talleyrand, you must be at Erfurt a day or two before us. . . . You know Alexander well; you speak his language." If Napoleon really sent him into Germany with such words, then Talleyrand shows profound cynicism in reporting them in his *Memoirs*. To anyone who knows the role he played at Erfurt, there is not one word which does not seem bitterly ironic in retrospect.

Certainly he knew Alexander, and more than Napoleon realized, Alexander knew Talleyrand. At least Alexander suspected what he thought of Napoleon and his policies. Talleyrand had let Metternich guess his thoughts, and he had not always concealed them from the Russian ambassador, Tolstoy, who reported certain statements to his master, of which Napoleon seems to have been ignorant because at the time Fouché, the Minister of Police, was on the side of his former colleague and for the time being did nothing that would harm him. The Tsar, moreover, had another source of information in Caulaincourt. Talleyrand had always had such influence over him that he boastfully told Metternich it was "an influence without limits." When Caulaincourt was sent to Petersburg, their intimate correspondence allowed Talleyrand to direct him from afar. Caulaincourt, who felt all the Tsar's charm, did not hide from him the fact that some of Napoleon's "best friends" thought his policies excessive, dangerous, and doomed, and it was Talleyrand who constantly confirmed the imprudent confidences of this young ambassador.

Before he left for Erfurt, Napoleon intended to give the correspondence of Caulaincourt and Champagny to Talleyrand. He must have laughed, for he was better informed than the Emperor about Caulaincourt's opinions, and already knew by what means the Tsar was to be reached. "Prepare for me," Napoleon told him, "a pact that will content the Emperor Alexander, that above all will be directed against England, and about which I can feel at my ease as far as the rest are concerned. I shall help you; prestige will not be lacking." Unfortunately for the Emperor, Talleyrand was not lacking in prestige, but this prestige did not come from the confidence which the Emperor had shown in him, but from his thinly disguised hostility to Napoleonic policy.

The Emperor still had doubts on one point. He planned to have the Tsar agree to a war against Austria, if she made any move while he was in Spain. Would Talleyrand be able to overlook his own sympathies to insist on this point? "You are always an Austrian!" said Napoleon. "A

little, Sire, but I think it would be more exact to say that I am never Russian and I am always French."

He was more "Austrian" than ever. Hastening to Erfurt to look matters over, he had Metternich persuade his government to have as its representative the same Baron Vincent with whom he had been so friendly at Warsaw. He even wanted the Emperor of Austria to come in person to Austria to surprise the two others. "Nothing can be done in Europe," he had told Metternich, "unless the Emperor of Austria is either a help or a hindrance. As for me, I should like to see the Emperor Francis arrive as a hindrance." He was planning to create "hindrances" for Napoleon, who had entrusted him with the mission of creating "helps." He did not need Austria to create a "hindrance." Albert Sorel writes that at Erfurt Talleyrand decided to "alienate the ally and to preserve the enemy." By calling the Austrians to come as a third party and by diverting in advance all measures directed against them, he was preserving the enemy, but he was especially determined not to lose a day in alienating the ally.

He did not have much trouble. When he reached Erfurt, the Tsar was already alienated, and was determined not to give an inch unless the greatest advantages were granted him, not to engage himself in opposition to England nor Austria unless Napoleon would pay for his services by abandoning the Orient to his designs. And when everything made the meeting of the two allies a risky matter, Talleyrand's treachery added an even more terrible element.

The conferences at Erfurt

If he had counted on anticipating the Tsar and putting him on his guard against Napoleon, Talleyrand was disappointed. He arrived at Erfurt on September 24, and found only Caulaincourt, for the Tsar was tarrying in Weimar. Alexander did not appear until he learned on the twenty-eighth that Napoleon had arrived the day before. Thus it was the Emperor who presented the Prince to the Tsar. "He is an old acquaintance," said the latter with a smile, "I am delighted to see him. I hoped that he would be along." When Talleyrand conducted him to his carriage, Alexander said in a most gracious manner, "We shall see each other."

They were not to meet again for several days, and these several days seemed to ruin Talleyrand's personal plans. Determined to win his ally's agreement to oppose both Austria and England, Napoleon, on the way to Erfurt, had decided to give him everything that might put

him in a favorable disposition. The Tsar found the French sovereign ready to open up the Danubian principalities to him, and, as if anticipating one of his most intense preoccupations, to renew, in the clearest terms, his promise that he would never re-establish the Kingdom of Poland.

Talleyrand was uneasy. He saw the Tsar only in the salons where noble ladies held gala affairs for the host of princes, diplomats, and great soldiers who were at Erfurt. He had listened to Baron Vincent's grievances without being able to reassure him. At least he took steps to aid him in his distress. Strange as it seems, it was the former French minister who introduced the poor, disconcerted, Austrian diplomat to the Chancellor Roumiantsof, and he himself had frequent discussions with Baron Vincent, who was hardly encouraged by them. Talleyrand was not optimistic himself. When closeted with the Tsar, Napoleon had no third party present at their talks, and it was only through public gossip that Talleyrand learned that Chancellor Roumiantsof was already drawing up the articles of the treaty, which were equally satisfying to both allies.

. . . . .

Talleyrand had determined to mar this harmony, and it was the Tsar who gave him the opportunity. One evening at a ball given by the Princess de Thurn-Taxis, he suddenly thought he saw a shadow pass over the face of the Russian sovereign, who suddenly drew him aside and said abruptly,

"Has the Emperor spoken to you these days?"

"No, Sire, and if I had not seen M. de Vincent, I should have thought that the interview at Erfurt was simply a pleasure party."

"What does M. de Vincent say?" Alexander exclaimed.

"Sire, some very reasonable things, for he hopes that Your Majesty will not let the Emperor Napoleon lead him to adopt measures threatening or at least offensive to Austria, and, if Your Majesty will allow me to say so, my wishes are the same."

"I wish it, too," answered the Tsar, "but it is very difficult, for the Emperor Napoleon seems well prepared to me."

"No, Sire, you must make many observations."

He insinuated these observations, all of them tending to exclude Austria from the treaty between France and Russia and to reassure the Emperor Francis, instead of alarming him.

When Talleyrand saw Alexander the next day, he was determined to strike the great blow.

"Sire," he said, "what did you come to do here? It is up to you to

save Europe, and you will not succeed by giving Napoleon his head. The French people are civilized; their sovereign is not. The sovereign of Russia is civilized; his people are not. Therefore, it is up to the sovereign of Russia to be the ally of the French people. The Rhine, the Alps, the Pyrenees are the conquests of France. The rest is the conquest of the Emperor; they do not belong to France."

These terrible words indeed constituted treason. Alexander was overcome. New perspectives were suddenly opening before him. This Frenchman, who he thought was the best representative of public opinion, was not simply fighting against his sovereign by putting his ally on guard against measures that would be to Austria's disadvantage, but he also seemed to say that France, which the Tsar had considered as one with Napoleon, was also in opposition to him, disavowed his conquests, denied his glory, and seemed to open her arms to the future "savior" of Europe, whom she would one day greet as a liberator. Seeing that Alexander was deeply stirred and almost upset, Talleyrand pushed home his advantage. He offered to see Baron Vincent as soon as possible, to explain matters to him, and to calm him.

The Tsar received the Austrian emissary, who, dismayed by a conference with Napoleon a few hours earlier, was ready to discourage his court against all military action. But Alexander, under Talleyrand's influence, so assured Vincent that he left him all smiles.

Napoleon would have been thunderstruck if he had known about this conversation, and especially its origin. He knew that Talleyrand had spoken with Alexander, but he never even suspected the treachery which had changed the Tsar's mind. In the days that followed, however, he must have noticed the beginning of new resistance and unforeseen demands on the Tsar's part. Since for the first time he had doubts about the duration and the solidity of the Empire, the Tsar was not ready to break the alliance, but since he was no longer so sure of it, he wanted to bring him all possible advantages for the time being. Ignoring the requests of his ally, the principle of which he had already admitted, he adopted a high-handed manner, and claiming the right to invade the Danubian provinces with no further delay, he refused to threaten Austria specifically.

Faced with these pretensions and this new resistance, Napoleon felt that something had gone wrong and was exasperated, but he was so far from suspecting the cause that it was to Talleyrand he confided not only his disappointment but the task of winning over the Tsar again.

"I have done nothing," the Emperor said to him after the conference of October 5, during which the Tsar had been particularly stubborn.

"I have thought it over in all its aspects, but he is narrow-minded. I have not been able to get one step ahead."

Talleyrand reassured him hypocritically, saying, "Sire, I think that Your Majesty has done a great deal more since coming here, for Emperor Alexander is completely charmed."

Napoleon, decidedly abused, replied, "Well, then, you are his dupe. If he loves me so much, why doesn't he sign?"

The treaty was still undecided. The Tsar constantly demanded that it include permission for him instantly to invade the coveted Turkish provinces, while Napoleon insisted that measures be taken against Austria in case she continued to re-arm. Alexander now hesitated to accept the clause in question, and such were his relations with Talleyrand, that it was to him he secretly submitted the document and it was Talleyrand who had the clause struck out. The Tsar contented himself with writing a letter to the Emperor of Austria in which he "put him on guard" against an "imprudence," but he wrote it in such terms that it was better calculated to reassure Francis II than to intimidate him. Alexander had another discussion with Talleyrand, who seemed relieved. "He needed to be calmed down," he told the Tsar, "and I do not doubt that Your Majesty's letter produced this effect." "That was at least my intention," he replied. Their collusion was complete. Eager to finish, Napoleon made up his mind and agreed that Austria would only be warned benevolently. Thus the meetings did not attain their goal.

The consequences

It was really Talleyrand who caused the failure of the negotiations by his interference as they were drawing to a close. This was not the worst, but rather the Tsar's conviction that Napoleon had been betrayed by certain of his own people. Austria, and soon England, were informed of this discovery. "We have finally reached an epoch when we seem to be offered allies from within the Grand Empire," wrote Metternich, and the news spread from one chancellery to another. Europe was now certain that the day would come, when, after a battle had finally been won, she would see the sudden downfall of the great enemy, undermined by the efforts of a group of Frenchmen who were secretly but bitterly hostile.

A group, indeed, for no one was long unaware of the fact that Talleyrand had his followers, and the worst was that one of them was none other than Caulaincourt himself. It was at Erfurt, where he saw him every day, that Talleyrand had won complete control of him. So thoroughly had he converted him to his ideas and opinions that Caulain-

court, sent by Talleyrand, had determined Alexander to reject everything in the treaty which had to do with Austria. In testimony to this fact, Talleyrand himself confided to Metternich, "Caulaincourt, who is entirely devoted to my political point of view, has been instructed to second all the measures undertaken by the Prince of Schwarzenberg (at Petersburg). The interest of France herself demands that the powers capable of resisting Napoleon be united as an obstacle to his insatiable ambition. Napoleon's cause is no longer that of France. The whole of Europe cannot be saved except through the close union of Austria and Russia."

Except for the Tsar and some confederates, no one realized the treachery at Erfurt. Who could have seen behind the mask of Talleyrand, who offered glacial impassibility to the most penetrating eye? Goethe, who saw him at Weimar, was horrified by his closed eyes and almost dead face. "We could not help thinking of the gods of Epicurus, who live 'where rain and snow are unknown, where the tempest never blows.' Such was the tranquillity this person seemed to enjoy. The storms which howl all about him do not touch him. One can conceive of his having such a face; one cannot conceive of how he can keep it."

It is certain that the Emperor did not suspect this intrigue at Erfurt, and perhaps he never knew of it. If he had seen through it, he might possibly have had Talleyrand, great dignitary though he was, arrested and executed upon his return for having betrayed his cause and that of the French state. And this ignorance of the drama of Erfurt is perhaps one of the most tragic aspects of the lot of the all-powerful sovereign. Napoleon had always known the threats to the Empire from the plots of Europe, aided by those of the declared royalists. What was so deadly about this situation was the fact that the men who were undermining him came before him every day, impassible or smiling, busy and eager. It was a prolongation of Erfurt. When Maurice de Talleyrand returned to Paris, he perhaps said to himself what he was to proclaim one day, "At Erfurt, I saved Europe!" That may be, but as Vitrolles, who alone was edified by his confidences, said, he saved it "only by a masterpiece of perfidy"—let us call it felony.

22

THE TALLEYRAND-FOUCHÉ "PLOT"

A troubled situation

HAVING RETURNED to Paris on October 19, the Emperor left again on the twenty-ninth to take charge of his Spanish army. He thought that he had no more than four months ahead of him, for he knew that Austria was continuing to arm and felt sure that he would have to deal with her by the beginning of spring, 1809. He had to crush the Spanish insurrection and throw the English armies back to the sea. Then he would have to face the Austrian armies, that eternal rock of Sisyphus, which fell periodically and which he was forever condemned to set back in place.

These enforced absences became more and more dangerous. As soon as he turned his back, opposition grew bolder, intrigues were spun, plots were hatched. This is what had happened in 1800, 1805, 1806, and 1807. What would happen in the autumn of 1808, when, more than ever, uneasiness engendered discontent? "This devilish Spanish business costs me dear," the Emperor had exclaimed at Erfurt because of the consequences of Baylen. Within the country, the "devilish business" had less apparent but equally troublesome effects. Public opinion was opposed to a war for which there seemed to be no reason. Elements hostile to the *régime,* of the right as well as of the left, prevailed; on the right, the Bourbons were pitied as the victims of usurpation; on the left, there was sympathy for the people who had arisen to defend their independence, as had France in 1792.

Two "enemies"

"At the moment two men hold the first place in France in public opinion and in influence, Messrs. Talleyrand and Fouché," wrote Metternich to his Court on December 4, 1808. "Formerly opposed to each other in views and in interest, they have been brought together by circumstances independent of themselves. I do not fear to suggest that at this moment their aim and the means of attaining it are the same;

these latter have a chance of success because they conform to the wishes of a nation completely exhausted by a long series of efforts, dismayed by the immensity of the career which the actual master of its destiny wishes it to undertake, also a people less disposed than any other to maintain, at the price of its blood and its fortune, projects which are simply the personal ones of this master." These last words are the exact echo of the opinions offered by Talleyrand at Erfurt and later to the Austrian ambassador.

Indeed, in October 1808, Talleyrand and Fouché still passed for two irreconcilable adversaries, two "enemies." This hostility was less the result of their old quarrels as ministers than of their temperaments, which were radically antipathetic to each other. Undoubtedly they had more than one trait in common, such as an absence of moral sensibility in political matters, great contempt for people, a cunning distrust of violence as well as of sentimentality, skepticism about great emotions and great phrases. But there was a mutual scorn between this dissolute *grand seigneur* and this little pedant, still puritanical and severe in his habits. The mutual antipathy which resulted from this mutual contempt had resisted all attempts to bring them together, and until 1808, the opposition of their characters had amused the public and had kept Napoleon's mind at rest.

They were politicians to the core, however, so that their emotions could never speak louder than their interests, but opposing interests were exactly what had divided them in all circumstances. The result was bitter hatred, manifested by an unending series of tricks and traps and continual *lazzi,* for neither one was lacking in sarcasm, even though their minds were of a different cast. In 1807, it was said that things were worse than ever between them, although the "disgrace" of the Prince de Bénévent seemed to lessen Fouché's jealousy. But the public, which amused itself with this rivalry, this complete opposition of origin, habits, temperament, and politics, still liked to exaggerate.

An unexpected event

At one of Talleyrand's magnificent evening parties at his mansion on the Rue de Varennes (actually the Matignon mansion), the Minister of Police, completely at his ease, suddenly appeared, although he had never crossed the threshold of the sumptuous dwelling before. Talleyrand treated his guest with unusual cordiality and welcomed him with unaccustomed affability. Taking him by the arm, he crossed the salons while chatting with a warmth unusual in him, then led him into an isolated corner, but one in which people could see them talking

with animation that was most unlike their usual phlegmatic manner.

There was immense and general astonishment among the crowd of guests, and if, as there is every reason to believe, these two perfect actors had planned this scene to create a sensation, they were completely successful. "No one could believe his eyes," said a certain witness. This long promenade through the Prince's salons seemed to everyone, whether friend or foe of the Empire, as the most serious political manifestation that had been seen for years, since it was not only the revelation, but the confirmation of a deliberate accord between the two men.

Fouché in 1808

In reality, this understanding dated back several weeks. It was in part the work of Blanc d'Hauterive, Councilor of State, a figure of secondary importance but whose role under the Empire deserves to be studied. A former Oratorian, Hauterive had, like almost all the former members of the Company, remained on good terms with Fouché, his ex-brother, but his career had brought him to the Ministry of Foreign Relations, where he had become Talleyrand's right-hand man, confidant, counselor, and agent. Hauterive suffered from the reciprocal hostility of the two men, all the more because he thought that good will between them was necessary to the good management of public affairs. As a matter of fact, he was, as I shall show, one of those who served the *régime* but who followed the progress of Napoleonic hegemony with an uneasy and often disapproving eye.

"The Emperor is carrying his opinions very far," he wrote to Talleyrand as early as 1805, "but he is led on farther by circumstances, and has been raised even higher perhaps than his own ideas. I do not see how he can achieve peace except by crushing the whole world." If he dared to speak thus right after Austerlitz, what must he have thought in the autumn of 1808, when many others were beginning to be alarmed? He looked for a way to restrain the extravagant course of Napoleonic policy, and, as he wrote to Metternich, Talleyrand and Fouché alone were in a position to play such a role. But they had to combine their action and to be reconciled. Hauterive lectured Fouché, whom he treated with familiarity. Fouché still harbored a grudge against Talleyrand for the sharp and often poisonous remarks which he had made about him for years. Would he be so weak, Hauterive often said to him, as to sacrifice the benefits of a necessary understanding to this grudge?

Talleyrand's work

Ever since his return from Erfurt, Talleyrand had continued to make increasingly gloomy prophecies about the Emperor's future, and he increased his efforts to make himself welcome to various European cabinets. Hardly had he returned to Paris when he tried to follow up the relations with the Tsar which had been formed at Erfurt. Though he did such a great disservice to Napoleon's interests, he seems to have served those of his own family very well. It was through the Tsar that he won for his nephew, Edmond de Périgord, the hand of one of Europe's richest heiresses, Dorothy de Biren of the princely family of Courlande, the future Duchess of Dino, who for thirty years played such an important role in close connection with the Prince. Under the pretext of thanking Alexander for his decisive intervention in this affair, he wrote him a letter in which he was outrageously flattering.

"Every day I have deeper gratitude to lay at Your Majesty's feet. I would be devoted if Your Majesty had done nothing for me; I will be because Your Majesty inspires me with the most sincere sentiments, because Your Majesty displays the most perfect kindness and all the fine qualities which still ennoble the first throne in the world. It is pleasant to think that upon you, Sire, now depend the destiny of the universe and the progress of civilization which are the wish of your noble and feeling heart . . . ,"—four pages in this style.

He also gave daily warnings to the Austrian ambassador of the dangers in store for his country when Napoleon, as conqueror of Spain (he had just opened the way to Madrid in the battle of Somo Sierra), recrossed the Pyrenees. He even told Austria "not to be forestalled"—a clear incitement to attack France before the completion of the Emperor's victory in Spain.

Napoleon continued to be completely unaware of this secret work on the part of his former minister. He was, nevertheless, uneasy at the thought that he was unoccupied and he tried to direct him towards an active role, but one in domestic politics. As a "Vice-Grand Elector," Talleyrand had in theory the relation of an imperial power to the Assemblies. Disturbed by the fact that the Legislative Corps was "without direction," the Emperor asked the Vice-Grand Elector to receive about forty deputies, councilors of state, and ministers four times a week "in order to make them see each other . . . , to become acquainted with principles, and to cultivate their minds." Talleyrand accepted, and on December 8, he sent the Emperor a report in which, after having met with the "legislators," he drew from his inquiry the conclusion that "the

Legislative Corps should be decreased" and "thus made to harmonize with the monarchic system." He knew this would please the master, for the more deeply he plunged into secret intrigues, the more he tried to work up some sort of alibi for the day when they might be discovered.

If he thought that the Empire was already condemned, he could not hide the dangers of his own position. If the game he had played at Erfurt were ever discovered, he would be lost. He had to take matters in his own hands, prepare traps within like those he had prepared without, and, in any case, see to it that he would be accepted by the coming government, whatever it might be. But he had no party; at the most he had a coterie, a circle of a few friends, and since he was no longer a minister, he had no possibilities of action. Fouché was the man who had party backing. In fact, his power was now such that it was dangerous to whoever was not on his side and most valuable to whoever enjoyed his good will. Talleyrand's antipathies, feelings of contempt, even his hatreds, had never prevailed over his interests. Therefore, through Hauterive, he let the Minister of General Police know that he was favorable to this famous "understanding."

The aim of the "plot"

They agreed to meet in the salon of a friend, the Princess de Vaudémont, who was friendly to them both, but who had received them separately until this time; but for greater security, their first meeting took place at this lady's country house at Suresnes. With a little less discretion, they saw each other again at Mme de Rémusat's, an expert in intrigues who was eager to play a role in the affair.

They were not in the same situation. Talleyrand no longer held his post, and because of his perilous position, he had everything to gain from the Emperor's downfall or disappearance. Undoubtedly, as Metternich wrote to Stadion on January 11, 1809, "they would not bring on a catastrophe," but "not having the active courage to provoke one, they would profit from those which would arise." What Metternich meant was that Talleyrand would not dare to go so far as to prepare an assassination, but that an assassination would find him prepared. Fouché himself could not wish for the Emperor's disappearance, far from it. He was still the most powerful minister of the Empire, if not the one most in favor, and his past gave him every reason to fear a crisis that might end in a Bourbon counter-revolution. Indeed, Talleyrand still feared the Bourbons, for he knew the severe opinions that the exiled princes and their followers still had of him. He shared Fouché's fears about a restoration, but to a lesser degree. In 1808, neither the apostate

bishop nor the regicide of the Convention could possibly have imagined that day in July, 1815, when they would walk arm-in-arm from the cabinet of Louis XVIII, both of them ministers of Louis XVI's brother. When they were having their conferences in the autumn of 1808, they must have foreseen the restoration of the Bourbons simply as something to be prevented.

They based everything upon the possibility, undesirable for Fouché, desirable for Talleyrand, of the Emperor's death, whether by accident or assassination. The rumor reached as far as Petersburg (Joseph de Maistre echoed it as early as December, 1808) that "in case of a misfortune," they both wanted to establish themselves with Joseph, who had been appointed by the Constitution as Napoleon's successor. In reality, neither one admitted the possibility that France could accept Joseph as Emperor; if Napoleon were gone, another soldier of the Revolution, such as Bernadotte, Moreau, or Murat, would be more acceptable. In December, 1808, the two "conspirators" planned to get Murat on the imperial throne.

Murat, a soldier of great prestige, charming, popular, well thought of by soldiers, a son of the people, but husband of a Bonaparte, and a king, had only a mediocre intelligence and a weak character. Exactly for this reason, however, Talleyrand and Fouché saw themselves as the powers behind the throne of this brilliant cavalier, one of them controlling foreign affairs, the other internal matters, and thus his mediocrity, of which France was unaware, was more of an advantage than otherwise. The rumor arose, some say it was started by Fouché himself, that he had organized a series of new relay stages between Naples and Paris, so that "the king might arrive more promptly," should the need arise. Protesting against this rumor several weeks later to the Emperor, Fouché declared, in regard to his "pretended intimacy" with the Prince de Bénévent, that "intelligent people knew well . . . that they could have been united only for the sake of the real and evident (an equivocal word) interest of the Bonaparte dynasty."

They informed Murat, but Eugene, the vice-King of Italy, intercepted the letter and sent it on to Napoleon, who was then pushing the English back to the sea, after his crushing defeat of the Spaniards. Other news reached the Emperor through Madame, his mother, and the Empress. Napoleon received all this information at Astorga. This fact seems confirmed by the haste with which he left Astorga on January 7, leaving his lieutenants in charge of operations which he thought would be decisive, and rushed furiously to Paris by way of Valladolid and Bayonne.

Napoleon's grievances

Hardly had he arrived on January 23 when he had the Arch-Chancellor come to the Tuileries. While he was very much irritated with Fouché, it seemed to Cambacérès that he did not think him capable of having taken his death and an upheaval in the state so lightly. Since he still thought him necessary to the General Police and intended to keep him there, he preferred to think that he had been led on and duped by Talleyrand, on whom the full force of his wrath fell. Certainly he hardly suspected Talleyrand's complete treachery at Erfurt, which was prolonged by his constant relations with Metternich at Paris, but a sort of instinct warned him that Talleyrand had given himself up to intrigues of a disquieting nature. His private police, moreover, had informed him of how Talleyrand was trying to rid himself of certain responsibilities by foisting them upon him. He saw in this fact a proof that this man, who had received so many benefits from the government, was now fighting secretly against it. Exasperated by the opposition which had formed in his absence, the Emperor thought of discouraging it by a decisive action. He did not know that Talleyrand was culpable of criminal treason, but he did know that he was culpable of serious "felony," and that, he thought, was enough to make an example of him from which all could take warning.

23

JANUARY 28, 1809

IT MUST be said that for years the Emperor had had a low opinion of Talleyrand's character which equaled his high opinion of his intelligence. He had hardly concealed his contempt from Talleyrand himself. He told Molé in 1813, "At the time of the Concordat, I wished to take him out of his filth in spite of himself by asking the Pope for a cardinal's hat for him, and I came close to getting it. Well, he never wanted to let me do it, and, in spite of me, to the scandal of all Europe, he married his shameful mistress. . . . He is certainly, as everyone knows, the man who has stolen the most. . . ." What he said to Molé in 1813, he was already thinking in 1808 and earlier. When he made Clarke Minister of War in 1807, he said to him, "Clarke, I forbid you to have anything to do with Talleyrand. He is only s—t; he'll dirty you." He concluded, "How do you expect this man not to be rich, since he has sold all those who have bought him?" The Emperor had the proof that he had collected millions by stealing from the State as well as from foreigners. He had denied this with such boldness that Napoleon had to marvel at him. "What a liar!" he exclaimed, "but what a liar!" Yet Napoleon did not know the half of his stealing nor a tenth of his lying, but he suspected him of everything. He had condemned him for this as he had for his "shameful" marriage.

For some time the Emperor had been feeling that even Talleyrand's advice had led him to make unwise decisions. Talleyrand had presented the Spanish affair as a great deed of statesmanship, but it had turned out badly. Naturally Napoleon also thought of the affair of the Duke d'Enghien and of how Talleyrand, who was responsible for it, pretended to deplore it among his intimates. And now he learned that Talleyrand was doing the same thing about this Spanish enterprise, not only denying that he had advised it, but even declaring that he had advised against it.

"He has said, in my absence," cried the Emperor to Roederer, "that he went down on his knees to prevent the Spanish affair, but he pestered

me for two years to undertake it! He maintained that I would need only 20,000 men. He gave me twenty memoranda to prove it. He is behaving just as he did about the Duke d'Enghien. I didn't even know him; Talleyrand made me know him. . . . And after advising his death, he whimpered about it to all his acquaintances!"

Such conduct exasperated him much more than all his talks with Fouché, which he dismissed as foolishness. This felony seemed hateful to him, and suddenly his memory was full of all the thefts, all the lies, all the cheating, all the disgraces, which he had tolerated to keep him in his service.

The scene at the Tuileries

On January 28, there was a restricted council, at which several ministers and the dignitaries who were in Paris were present. Talleyrand was one. After the meeting, Napoleon detained Talleyrand along with Cambacérès and Lebrun and two of the ministers, Decrès and Fouché. Walking with his hands clasped behind his back, as was his habit, he began to complain bitterly of what had happened while he was in Spain. He did not speak of the suspicious conferences between Talleyrand and Fouché, but of the efforts of speculators on the Stock Exchange to cause the downfall of the state funds, of the "forty black balls" of the Legislative Corps against the new Code, of rumors designed to destroy public confidence. The public had been allowed to get out of hand and opinion had been spoiled. Men whom he had honored with his trust had counted on his death. They had done worse by making criticisms, by letting doubts be seen.

"Those whom I have made great dignitaries or ministers cease to be free in their thoughts or in their expressions," he added, "they can be only the organs of mine. For them, treachery begins when they allow themselves to have doubts; it is complete if they go from doubt to dissent." Everything had to be straightened out, he concluded.

The meeting seemed to end with these generalities. Talleyrand, who by his expression seemed to have nothing to do with these matters, had gone to lean on his elbow, then rest his back against a table (he could never stand up for a long time without feeling great fatigue). Suddenly, perhaps exasperated by his impassibility, the Emperor walked right up to him. Was it true that in his absence he had allowed himself to tell complete falsehoods, he to whom the Emperor had given his confidence, while ignoring many grievances against him?

All his long pent-up contempt burst forth and he cried, "Thief! You

are a thief! You are a coward, a man of no faith; you do not believe in God. All your life, you have failed in your duties. You have deceived and betrayed everyone. Nothing is sacred to you. You would sell your father. I have showered you with riches, and there is nothing that you are not capable of doing against me. Thus for ten months, because you haphazardly supposed that my business in Spain was turning out badly, you have had the shamelessness to say to anyone who would listen that you had always blamed me for my enterprise in that kingdom, while it was you who first gave me the idea, who perseveringly urged me on. And that man, that unfortunate (everyone knew he referred to the Duke d'Enghien), who informed me of his place of residence? Who aroused me so that I was so cruel to him? So what are your designs? What do you want? What are you hoping for? Dare to speak out! You deserve to be broken like a glass. I have the power to do it, but I despise you too much to take the trouble. Why didn't I have you hung from the grating of the Carrousel? But there is still plenty of time for that." He stopped, then, "Look, you are s—t in a silk stocking!"

Talleyrand had remained leaning on the table, his face white, closed, death-like, his eyes dull, his lips compressed. This exasperating attitude, indicative not of dejection, which would have been natural, but of a sort of icy disdain, set Napoleon beside himself, so that he sought an insult that would be worse than a blow.

"You did not tell me," he sneered, "that the Duke of San Carlos was your wife's lover."

"Indeed, Sire, I did not think that this news was to the interest of Your Majesty's glory or mine,"—Talleyrand at his best.

The Emperor seemed to be disconcerted. He started towards the door, but before going out, he included Talleyrand and Fouché in a menacing look. "Know that if a revolution does come suddenly," he cried, "no matter what side you may have taken, it will crush you both first of all." And he finally went out, slamming the door.

All eyes were fixed on the Prince, who remained immobile and mute for several seconds. Then he, too, limped towards the door, but pausing on the sill, he turned to his stunned colleagues and said in a thin voice, "What a pity, Messieurs, that such a great man should be so badly brought up!"—an inadequate revenge upon the "parvenu" for a "born gentleman."

He had the pitiful courage to appear the same evening at his dear friend's, the Countess de Laval, and to tell his familiars about the frightful scene at the Tuileries with more or less accuracy.

"What!" cried the Countess, "what! you listened to him, you were with him, and you did not grab a chair, a pair of tongs, a poker—oh, anything at all! You didn't throw yourself upon him?"

"Oh, I certainly thought of it," he answered with a shrug, "but I am too lazy for that."

Actually, there is every indication that he was very much afraid. With the evidence of that incredible exit, that flood of insults, that cross-examination, he must certainly have thought that the Emperor had finally found out about his treason at Erfurt and was suddenly going to overwhelm him with it and have him arrested. He must have felt some consolation in discovering that the sovereign whom he had betrayed still did not know the worst. But who could tell what might happen next? He was overcome with a weakness when he reached home that night, and stayed in bed with a fever all the next day.

Disgrace

That day he received, not the order of exile which he might well have expected, but a letter from the Emperor, who simply told him that since he had been deprived of his position as Grand Chamberlain, he should return the symbolic key to the messenger. The punishment was out of proportion to the threats which had been made, though it deprived him of his right to enter the Tuileries and the Emperor's room at any time and of a salary of 40,000 francs.

"May Your Majesty allow me to tell him the following: that for the first time in my life I have obeyed Him with sorrow," he replied, ". . . My consolation is that I belong to Your Majesty through the force of two feelings which no sorrow will be able to surmount nor to weaken, gratitude and devotion which will end only with my life."

On the evening of the twenty-ninth, however, he was one of the first to arrive at the Court Circle, imperturbable despite his discomfort. Gaudin describes the general stupefaction caused by this unexpected appearance. Napoleon, as he walked from one to another, spoke to the Prince's two neighbors, but seemed not to notice him. Even at the risk of causing a new outburst, however, Talleyrand intended to work his way in again, for he knew that after his anger had been calmed, Napoleon would be most humane.

Two days later, as if in affirmation of his complete tranquillity of conscience or, at least, of mind, he appeared at a diplomatic reception at the Château. All Paris now knew what had happened on the twenty-eighth, and all eyes were on the Prince as the Emperor came forward. Napoleon again wanted it to seem that he did not see him, but, as he

asked one of his neighbors a question, Talleyrand, very much at his ease, answered in his stead, then bowed and kissed the hand of the stupefied sovereign.

Clemenz von Metternich was the only one of the diplomats present who knew exactly what repressed rage there was behind this extravagant courtliness. The Prince had visited him during the day, and the next day he wrote to Stadion that Talleyrand had "taken off all his masks." "He told me," Metternich continued, "he thought it was his duty to enter into direct relations with Austria, that he had refused offers made to him by Count Louis Cobenzl which he would now accept. He said that the reason for this first refusal was the position he held at the time. 'I am now free and we have our cause in common.'" For a moment, Metternich might have thought that he was dealing with a Frenchman misled by a thirst for revenge, and there was certainly something of the sort in this incredible action. The illusion did not last long, however, for actually, he did not seek revenge alone, for he came to sell himself, and very dearly. "He let me know," continued Metternich, "that he needed a few hundred thousand francs. . . . I answered that the Emperor (Francis II) was not averse to showing his gratitude if he wished to serve the general cause. He answered that it was his, that nothing was left for him but to perish with it. 'Are you astonished by the proposal which I have made?' he asked. 'No,' I replied, 'I regard it as a worthy pledge.'" This answer was perhaps all the more insulting in its brevity than Napoleon's vituperations.

The bargain was struck at Vienna. On February 10, Stadion gave his representative *carte blanche* and authorized him to promise Talleyrand "anything that he might reasonably desire . . . as long as you are convinced," he added prudently, "that he wishes to and is able to render you real and important service." In the meantime, Austria advanced 100,000 francs to Metternich that were destined for Talleyrand, who, without losing a moment, killed two birds with one stone, as usual. It would have been too much, even with his fierce desire for revenge, for him to have charged nothing for putting himself at the disposal of a foreign power, which was already an enemy by 1809. Loss of his position as Chamberlain meant loss of 40,000 francs a year, but he was getting back 100,000, and hoping for more.

It is a miracle that the Emperor was unaware of his undertakings. Did not Fouché have "exact observers" and Champagny "diplomatic police"? It is astonishing that he did not imagine, in spite of all he had said, that Talleyrand could sink so low in his desire for vengeance, and that he thought he had punished him enough by inflicting such a

light disgrace upon him. After the scene at the Tuileries, he should have been deprived of all power to do harm. Queen Hortense wrote that Napoleon "humiliated him too much and did not punish him enough." In fact, he left this man, enraged by too many insults, free to avenge himself. If the most frivolous King of France had thought that one of his servitors was a thief and a traitor and had told him so, he would have had him arrested, taken to Vincennes, and then to some distant prison, as Louis XIV did with Fouquet.

Napoleon had simply exploded on the twenty-eighth, and if he took back the Chamberlain's key on the twenty-ninth, it was not as a sanction, but simply as a precaution.

"I will do him no harm," he explained to Roederer a few weeks later, "I will let him keep his other positions. I even have the same feelings for him that I had before. But I have deprived him of the right to enter my room at any time. Thus he will never have a private talk with me. He will no longer be able to say that he did or did not advise me to do one thing or another."

Talleyrand was not sensible of such indulgence. By pretending to forget the terrible insults he had suffered on January 28, he made the Emperor forget them himself, and to betray him even more, he redoubled his courtesies. But these were only means for keeping himself in a position to pave the way for a mortal enemy, who, as early as 1809, was biding his time, lying in wait, hoping for the hour of complete revenge.

24

SEMI-RETIREMENT

"IT IS thirty days that Your Majesty has been absent, and six victories have been added to the marvelous history of the preceding campaigns . . . Though I may be far away from the scene of these glorious enterprises, I am still, in all my feelings and in all my thoughts, in the vanguard of those servitors who have put all their personal hopes for advancement, glory, and happiness, in the accomplishment of Your Majesty's great designs."

Thus Talleyrand congratulated Napoleon after the first battles against Austria around Eckmuhl. It seems incredible when one recalls that only three months had passed since Napoleon had publicly disgraced him.

It also seems incredible that the man who could still write, "Your glory, Sire, is our pride, but your life is our existence," could also have given Metternich daily information on the preparations being made against Austria until the very last minute of his stay in Paris. He even went so far as to reveal to him secret orders addressed to the military chiefs and to send him documents which another traitor had given over. Metternich wrote to his chancellery on February 1, "X. (i.e., Talleyrand) has just informed me that General Oudinot has received orders to march against Augsburg and Ingolstadt. . . . X. . . . thinks that immediate action should be taken as a pretext to put Oudinot's movement on a warlike footing." On March 7, he wrote, "My relations with X. are very active. It is through him, for the most part, that from one moment to another I learn things that may interest you." Talleyrand had been able to get hold of two memoranda which came from the imperial cabinet: "Russia is not better treated than Austria; I have had them informed at Petersburg." However, since the Austrian army had invaded Bavaria, Metternich had to leave Paris; he was somewhat reassured. "I am now seeking means to maintain an active correspondence with Talleyrand (the name was written out this time) all during the war."

Napoleon is fascinated

It is curious that the Emperor, as much as anyone else, yielded to Talleyrand's power of fascination, even from afar. Though Napoleon had been fully acquainted with this power of fascination in the past, had avowed it, and was irritated by it, he wanted to free himself by sending his minister far away from him after his dismissal in 1807. Yet he came back to him again, imprudently consulted with him, and, even more imprudently, employed him at Erfurt. His outburst of violence and insults on January 28 can perhaps be explained only by reference to this fascination to which he had given in, but with impatience. He had thought to get rid of it by putting a dirty ditch between them. But Talleyrand would have had to get angry himself and would have had to accept the rupture, but he had come to kiss his hand and had continued to shower him with the most flattering letters. Napoleon was still distrustful, but he was haunted by Talleyrand's image.

"I cannot keep myself from liking you," he said to him one day. That is saying a great deal, but it is certain that he was obsessed by him, thought of him incessantly, and spoke of him to everyone. When he thought that the negotiations for a new treaty with Austria in October, 1809, were being dragged out too long, he said to poor Champagny, "You have stipulated 100 millions in indemnity for France; it will all go to the Treasury, I know. In Talleyrand's time, we might not have received 60 of it; there would have been 10 for him. But everything would have been finished two weeks ago." "He is so capable, the most capable minister I had," he sighed to Caulaincourt, and to others. By the time that he came back from Austria, he seemed no longer to remember the scene on January 28. Floret, secretary of the Austrian embassy, wrote to his Court that the Prince had, at least apparently, been restored to favor. The Emperor had given him back his right to enter the Court; he summoned him to frequent talks, even received him at dinner. As Floret wrote on November 3, 1809, "He had his foot in the stirrup, but he is not yet in the saddle."

This partial return to favor caused some perplexity to those diplomats who had been nursing the Prince's grudges for a year. More than one must have shared the doubts of Francis II, who, in reference to Talleyrand's ambiguous attitude, said to his chancellor, "Is he acting according to his master's ideas? Does he serve him by a method which, eccentric as it may seem, can reach the same goal, that of avoiding complications for France by soothing us with chimeric hopes—or is he following out some distinctly personal point of view, shared with

some of the leading men of the State?" There were times when Metternich himself, who had become Prime Minister in October, 1809, was uncertain. Had he been dealing with an admirable comedian in Paris, had he let himself be tricked and robbed?

However, the Tsar also tried to avail himself of his services. When in March, 1810, Nesselrode arrived in Paris as secretary to Prince Kourakine's embassy, he sought out Talleyrand. "I have just come from Petersburg," he told him, "I am officially employed by Prince Kourakine, but I am accredited to you. I have a special correspondence with the Emperor, and I bring you a letter from him." Eager to weave the web of his plot, Talleyrand seized the thread that was offered to him. To his secret relations with the Austrian embassy, where, under the new ambassador, Prince Schwarzenberg, Count Floret took charge of the "Talleyrand affair," were added his no less secret relations with the Tsar, to whom Nesselrode sent detailed reports directly.

"It was my talks with M. de Talleyrand," he wrote, "and with other people opposed to Napoleon's growing ambition which made up the costs." This correspondence, which continued through 1810 and 1811, was full of "Cousin Henry" (Talleyrand), who gave advice to Russia, such as keeping on good terms with Austria, "with the aim of opposing the encroachments of France." And yet Talleyrand, who always played a double, and sometimes a triple game, always intended to substitute an Austrian alliance for the Russian alliance. Even while he preached to the Tsar about "concessions to Austria" against France, in the Orient, for example, he worked against Russia and did his best to bring Austria and Napoleon together.

The Austrian marriage

The occasion was the imperial divorce, followed by remarriage.

To tell the truth, this occurrence made it easy for Talleyrand to pursue his "Austrian" sympathies without seeming to do Russia an ill turn. At Erfurt, when Napoleon had told him to sound out the Tsar about the possibility of a union between their families, he had seen that Alexander shunned the idea. Though it is not known just what was said, the character of their relationship makes it probable that the Tsar did not conceal from Talleyrand his strong desire to be spared the need to make a formal refusal. When the divorce of Napoleon and Josephine was complete on December 15, 1809, and when the question of a new marriage arose, the Tsar had not changed his mind, and all his delays prove how determined he was on this point. Since he was about to make a flat refusal it would be surprising if he was mortified; never-

theless, he was, when he learned that Napoleon, weary of these delays, had obtained the hand of an Austrian archduchess. At any rate since he knew the Tsar's unwillingness better than anyone else, Talleyrand had reason to think that he was far from hurting him by working for the Austrian marriage.

According to Nesselrode, it was Talleyrand who urged Napoleon to solicit Austria, after he had grown impatient with the Tsar's hesitation. In truth, it does not seem that Napoleon had to "solicit"; I have shown elsewhere that the House of Hapsburg was less solicited than solicitous, and that in Vienna, Metternich had made overtures to French agents which left no room for doubt. When he was called to the Council on January 28, 1810, before which the Emperor placed "the problem of marriages," Talleyrand, in line with his policy of the past ten years, maintained that a union with the House of Austria was preferable to any other.

Relations with Russia

Even before it took place, he rather perfidiously represented this Austrian marriage to Nesselrode as something very alarming for the Tsar. The Austrian agents got wind of the plot. "Talleyrand is getting Nesselrode all worked up," wrote Floret. Russia, as he kept telling Nesselrode, was in no danger as long as the Spanish war lasted, but before a year was up, Russia "might be brought to account." Napoleon, he added, was now thinking of the reconstitution of a great Polish state. If Russia were not willing to have it built at her very doors and soon at her expense, the Tsar would have to summon all his forces to oppose it, have to finish his war with Turkey, and have to "flatter the vanity and also the interest of Bernadotte in Sweden to make him break off with France": such was the advice which Nesselrode sent on to Petersburg in the name of this distinguished Frenchman.

Talleyrand had succeeded in getting a salary from Austria in January, 1809. Now he tried to get money from the Tsar. In a long letter to Alexander on September 15, 1810, he wrote, "I need 1,500,000 francs." He added a prudent recommendation to "burn the letter." This recommendation shows that there was still a little naïveté in Talleyrand. The Tsar kept the letter since he thought it might be something to hold over him. Talleyrand must have been unusually embarrassed by the flat refusal in his reply, a refusal accompanied by a reminder of "good manners" which should have put an end to his requests. To think that it did so is to fail to understand how degradation of character can lead to lack of feeling. Thus on March 29, he shamelessly made another request through

Nesselrode, which seems to have succeeded no better than the first. Despite these mortifying refusals, he kept on informing the Tsar through his agent in Paris. He had tried to make treason pay. He did not succeed, so he committed treason gratuitously.

Napoleon's highs and lows

Napoleon had certain weaknesses, especially as far as Talleyrand was concerned. He would strike a man down and would quickly raise him up again, but if he seemed to take too much advantage of the favor which he had apparently regained, he would plunge him into disgrace again. Fouché, as well as Talleyrand, had known these changes from ill-humor to favor; so had others, simply to a lesser degree. As far as Talleyrand is concerned, one returns to the idea that the Emperor was defending himself, rather badly, against the unusual charm which his former minister had for him. In 1811 and 1812, having thought of ruining him in order to keep him under control, he rescued him from his comparative and passing difficulties, and, while reviling him, called him again for consultation.

Through all these changes in the imperial attitude, Talleyrand remained cold and reserved. He watched the approach of a rupture with Russia, forerunner of the great crisis for which he was waiting and hoping. On January 9, 1812, he wrote to the Duchess de Courlande, "we must try not to become too exasperated in order to be quite ready for the days which are coming and which do not look as if they will be easy."

The Emperor thought of employing him, if only to get him away from Paris. He was going to send him to Warsaw to organize the Polish state, which, after the first victories over Russia, would be restored to its previous size. Then what happened? It is difficult to understand. Napoleon, it was said, had sworn him to secrecy, but Talleyrand, usually so discreet, had talked freely in all the salons he frequented. The Duke de Bassano, who had succeeded to Champagny in the Ministry of Foreign Relations, feared Talleyrand's complete return to favor, which might have cost him his new portfolio. The Duchess de Bassano, who detested Talleyrand, seems to have conducted an intrigue to have the Emperor turn Talleyrand out again, on the pretext of his indiscretion. Indeed, Napoleon was so angry that Caulaincourt was astonished. He asked the Emperor to listen to Talleyrand's explanations.

"I do not want to see him," he replied. "I order you to chase him out of Paris. I forbid you to go to him, to speak to him about that."

As a matter of fact, he did not chase him out of Paris. But he let him

stay there in May, 1812, "driven to extremes," as Caulaincourt said, "and no longer showing any moderation." More than ever, the opposition, the malcontents, the dissenters turned towards him. But when the Emperor left, Talleyrand shut himself up in his "seraglio," appeared no more at the Tuileries, since the Empress had orders to receive him no longer, and pretended to be quite detached from men and events. But with silent joy he watched the approach of events which, as he said, were the beginning of the end for Napoleon.

25

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

The Prince tries to make himself desirable to the Bourbons

THE EMPEROR had left Paris on May 9; by the end of June, it was learned that he had crossed the Niemen with his armies on the twenty-fourth. From this date until September 6, he pursued the elusive Russian armies eastwards, and, drawn on by their retreat and urged on by his desire to finish them off, he allowed himself to be led from Vitebsk to Smolensk, and from Smolensk towards Moscow. On the sixth, the Russians, who were trying to block the route to the Holy City, were crushed after the bloody and hard-fought battle of Borodino, which the Emperor called the victory of the Moskowa. On the fifteenth Napoleon entered Moscow, and, in spite of the famous fire which had destroyed part of the city, he remained there for a little more than a month. On October 19, having, contrary to his hope, received no offer of peace from the Tsar, he decided upon the retreat that the prematurely icy season turned into a disaster. On November 23, he barely escaped from the union of the Russian armies at Beresina, and saved only the remnants of the enormous army of June, 1812.

When it was learned in November that the army had had to leave Moscow and was retreating to Smolensk, then to Vitebsk, the Prince saw Mme Aimée de Coigny a young woman who was trying to win him over to the Bourbons, and became severe in his criticisms. The Emperor was going to drag France into the worst evils.

"But, Monsieur," Aimée replied, "do you know the remedy? Can you find it? Does it exist?"

She hoped that he would speak of the Bourbons, but he simply said, "He must be destroyed, no matter how."

"I certainly think so, too," she exclaimed.

"Yes," resumed the Prince, "that man is worth no more than the sort of good he was able to do. His day as a force against the Revolution is gone. The ideas which he alone entertained have weakened; they are no longer dangerous, and it would be fatal if they died out. It is all

very well that he destroyed equality, but we still must have liberty. We need laws. With him, it's impossible. Now is the time to overthrow him."

He stopped, while she waited for some word of encouragement for the Bourbons, but he seemed to want to deceive her, for he, who loathed republican ideas, named only republicans.

"You know, Madame, some old servitors of liberty, Garat, a few others. As for me, I shall be able to reach Sieyès, I have the means. The thoughts of their youth must be brought back to life in their minds, it's a power, and then, since the Emperor is retreating from Moscow, he is very far away. Their love for liberty can be reborn."

"Do you hope so?" she asked, somewhat put out.

"Not very much, but still, it must be tried."

Did not Aimée de Coigny understand that the Prince was making fun of her? He spoke of "those people," such as Garat and Sieyès, only so the royalists would not think that he had come running to the Bourbons. He wanted guarantees before he would come over to them, but he always intended not to ask for them, but to have them offered. Since he undoubtedly thought that little Aimée did not allow him a wide enough scope, he sought another approach. He found it.

The old Archbishop of Rheims, his uncle, was one of the prelates who had refused to resign at the time of the Concordat. Thus he had won the favor of Louis XVIII, who had made him his chief chaplain. He was held in great esteem by the little court in exile at Hartwell. At the end of December, he received a letter which caused him the keenest emotion, for it was signed by his nephew, whose first steps in the priesthood he had guided. We do not have the letter, but it would be surprising if the Prince de Bénévent clearly stated his wish to return to favor with the King, but this wish was implicit in the act itself. The Archbishop, who was touched, understood, and speedily took the letter to Louis XVIII. Louis was not touched—it was not his way—at this return of the old prodigal son. He smiled with his customary malice and said acidly, "God be praised, Monsieur Archbishop. Bonaparte must be near his end, for I wager that when the Directory was near its end, your nephew wrote in the same terms to the conqueror of Italy. If you answer him, tell him that I accept the augury of his good memory."

The Prince advises

Was the Emperor so near his end? It did not seem so on December 18 when he descended from his carriage before the Tuileries, having unexpectedly rushed back to Paris. The next day, having "jumped from his post-chaise to his throne," as Mme de Coigny put it, he sum-

moned a great council. Talleyrand must have been somewhat astonished, but he pretended to joke. Loathing the Duke de Bassano, whom he called "a beast," and about whom he was always making remarks, he said, "You see how people always exaggerate. Wasn't it said that the baggage was lost? But here Maret is back again!"

Neither he nor anyone else, however, thought of laughing. Bulletin 29, signed by the Emperor, had revealed the Russian disaster to France and the world. To obtain new soldiers, Napoleon had brutally avowed his losses to the point of exaggerating them. For an instant, France had trembled with grief and fear, and Europe with joy and hope. The Emperor's return, twenty-four hours after the tragic bulletin, had sufficed to calm the public a bit, however, but whoever listened to the rumors perceived great cracks from Warsaw to Naples and from Madrid to Berlin. While the army, abandoned by Murat, who had received the command, was breaking up after Vilna, the Russians were already threatening the Grand-duchy of Warsaw. Metternich, who was better informed than anyone about the real nature of the disaster in Russia, finally saw the approach of the time for a great revenge, but he acted with his usual caution, affirmed his fidelity, and pretended to give a proof of his friendship by offering to intervene with the Tsar to obtain peace. He sent Count Bubna to Paris to offer this "intervention," which he counted on gradually transforming into "mediation." Thus Austria would get back her liberty by returning to neutrality, and then, in the name of Europe, she would state the demands which she had secretly encouraged. She would re-arm and, if these demands were not satisfied, would be able to act against France. Bubna arrived in Paris on December 30 to get the Emperor to authorize Metternich to begin seeking concessions.

Talleyrand, who was one of the first people seen by the Austrian envoy, knew the design of the Austrian embassy, with whose agents he was always in secret contact. He instinctively joined in Metternich's game. On January 3, after Bubna's arrival, when the defection of the Prussian army became known, the Emperor convoked an extraordinary session of the council, to which Talleyrand, along with Cambecérès, Caulaincourt, Maret, Champagny, and Duroc, was summoned. Should Austria be accepted as a middleman? Like Cambacérès and Caulaincourt, Talleyrand declared himself in favor of acceptance, but with a very clear plan about concessions. In the days that followed, he insisted to the Emperor, "Negotiate. You now hold pledges in your hands which you can abandon. Tomorrow you may have lost them, and then the power to negotiate advantageously will be lost, too." His advice appeared wise. If the Europeon chancelleries were themselves disposed

to state a plan for reorganization, and maintained it through the negotiations, they might come to something, but Talleyrand knew as well as the Emperor that Europe, even though conquered, had never given up the idea of getting everything back some day, and since Napoleon was already considered conquered, she would demand complete reprisal.

The Prince was so convinced of this fact that when the Emperor asked him to take charge of the matter, he refused. As a matter of fact, Napoleon offered him his old portfolio. Was the Emperor himself sincere? Did he not wish to compromise or to test him? According to Aimée de Coigny, Talleyrand refused coldly.

"I am not acquainted with your affairs," he replied.

"You are acquainted with them," said the Emperor in a rage, "but you want to betray me."

"No, but I do not wish to take charge of them because I look upon them as contradictory to my way of envisaging the glory and happiness of my country."

Fine sentiments, but in reality, he thought less of saving the Empire through advantageous concessions than of involving the Emperor in Metternich's scheme. The two men understood each other without having to make plans together. Floret, who was still in the Austrian embassy, saw Talleyrand, who sent his ideas on to Vienna through him. They agreed exactly with Metternich's designs.

"The peace is in Austria's hands," Talleyrand told Floret, "but, in order to have it, she must command it. She can do it only when she has an army of at least 200,000 men. She ought even to exaggerate her strength. Let her declare, 'I am arming for peace,' and everyone will be at her feet. If she develops feeble means, she will give umbrage without attaining her goal. If she is strong, she will be able to impose herself, and will succeed. I am not in public life, but if there were a congress at Vienna, I should go with pleasure to work with Count Metternich."

This was an anticipation of Metternich's wishes, and he replied, "All our conduct ought to prove to him (Talleyrand) that we follow entirely the point of view which ought necessarily to be his."

When Schwarzenberg reappeared in Paris as ambassador, he instantly joined forces with Talleyrand. Floret wrote to Vienna on April 15, "Prince Schwarzenberg spent the evening with the Prince de Bénévent, who held forth on his favorite theme, the Peace, assuming that Austria alone can create it by going about it carefully and by backing up her mediation with a great army. Prince Schwarzenberg assured

him that this was our only aim and that we were ready to make every effort, that the attitude of Emperor Napoleon himself invited us to take this attitude. 'The Emperor must become the King of France,' said the other (Talleyrand). 'Until now, everything has been done for the Empire. He lost the Empire when he lost the army. From the moment when he will no longer want to make war for the army, he will make peace for the French people, and then he will become King of France.' "

This had always been Talleyrand's idea, but by the time he stated it, it was no longer sincere. He had no hope that Napoleon, who had ruled over the Occident, would let himself become "King of France," and this was Metternich's opinion, too. "M. de Talleyrand's words," he wrote in the margin of Floret's report, "contain the complete expression of his character and the mark of his mind. The idea of making Napoleon pass from the empire to royalty is particularly characteristic of him. It has the value of a good joke, one not lacking in originality." In reality, Talleyrand saw only one King of France who could resign himself to giving up all the conquests that had been made since 1792, and that was Louis XVIII. But Talleyrand was still looking for alibis and hiding his secret thoughts, while looking for ways to win the King's favor.

He kept up his correspondence with his uncle, the Archbishop, Louis XVIII's man. Perhaps one of these letters was seized by the imperial police and sent to the Emperor. Or was the fact that his relations with the opposition were discovered enough to arouse Napoleon's suspicion?

Napoleon's new about-face

Whatever it was, he again had to endure one of those fits of rage by which Napoleon thought he could free himself from the "fascination" exercised by this "devilish fellow." The Emperor had at first spoken of having him indicted, or of at least exiling him to Valençay. A general outcry arose, for some of the Emperor's servitors, who were still devoted but increasingly uneasy, were more certain than ever that Talleyrand was the man who was needed. The Emperor had stopped at the worst point, threatening the Prince again, terrifying him in order to paralyze him.

During an audience on January 30, he challenged him violently, "I know you, I know what you are capable of. I'll have you punished as you deserve."

It was even said that, as he continued to overwhelm him with reproaches, he punched him on the jaw so that the Prince stumbled back against the wall. As in 1809, Talleyrand did not answer. He left when the Emperor dismissed him, and to the people who were on watch in

the antechamber, he said with a smile, "The Emperor is really charming this morning." But since he knew well to what danger he was exposed because of his intrigues, he was very much afraid, even more than on January 28, 1809. When he reached home, he succumbed to an attack, which had no consequences.

The Emperor threatened him in order to intimidate him. Actually, he thought him capable of but not culpable of treason. "His interests guaranteed me his fidelity much more than his character did," he said to Molé. In April, 1814, he said to Caulaincourt, "Talleyrand betrayed me for six months,"—which was an error of six years. He said later to Las Cases, "It seemed to me that he was then (1813) still faithful, that he was not yet betraying me."

He betrayed him in every way—within France by constantly whispering perfidious words, he tried to undermine the staunchest fidelity; outside of France, by informing the enemy, enlightening them and guiding them. But in his letters he affected great detachment. "I am far from having ambitious ideas," he wrote to the Duchess de Courlande. The saying was intended for the *cabinet noir*. It was his eternal alibi.

The Emperor had left on April 15, 1813, to wage his great battle of Germany against the new coalition, for the Russians and Prussians were now allies, and for the first few months, he seemed to be winning. The prodigious campaign extended from Lutzen to Bautzen, and on June 1, he seemed to be victorious, having routed the armies of the enemy and driven them to the Oder. "The Empire has come through its crisis and has triumphed over it," wrote a friend of the coalition. Metternich, disconcerted by these rapid victories, intervened. Austria was not yet ready, but when she was, if operations were still going on, Russia and Prussia would be crushed, and obliged to ask for peace. He suggested that the allies ask for an armistice. Napoleon would have refused it, he thought of rejecting the offer and consummating his victory, but all those to whom Talleyrand had spoken begged him to accept Austria's offer to have a good peace signed during the armistice. "Berthier and Caulaincourt urged me to it," Napoleon said. These men belonged to Talleyrand, who was present through them. When the negotiations had deliberately been dragged out for six weeks, Austria, finally ready, threw aside her mask and joined the coalition. After the last victory at Dresden on July 27, a series of blows hurled the French army back towards Leipzig, and finally, after the Battle of the Nations on October 16–19, the remnants of this army, overwhelmed by numbers, barely escaped and beat a full retreat towards the Rhine. The Emperor

returned to Saint Cloud on November 9, apparently already completely beaten. Invasion was at his heels.

There was a crowd at his levée on the tenth. The first face the Emperor noticed in the throng of courtiers was Talleyrand's. More than ever he considered him both valuable and open to suspicion. After all, Talleyrand had been right the preceding year in advising concessions which had not been made. If he had consented to serve him then, perhaps he would have come off better. But behind his expressionless face, Napoleon discerned an evil joy, a sly triumph, and the unwavering certitude that his day would come soon.

"What do you come here for?" he asked. "I know that you imagine that if I were to fail, you would be the leader. Take care, Monsieur. Nothing is gained by fighting against my power. I tell you that if I were dangerously ill, you would be dead before me."

With his usual presence of mind, Talleyrand replied, "Sire, I do not need such a warning to have my ardent wishes ask Heaven for the preservation of Your Majesty."

The Emperor's attitude was really extraordinary. A few days after threatening him with death, he summoned Talleyrand and consulted him again. King Joseph, having evacuated Madrid, had been beaten at Vittoria, and Spain was almost lost. What was to be done?

Talleyrand pretended to be surprised, saying, "You consult me as if we had not quarreled."

"Oh, let's forget the past and the future," exclaimed the Emperor, "and let's hear your opinion about the present moment."

Talleyrand thought that after treating with him, Ferdinand VII should be sent back to his people from Valençay. Thinking this good advice, the Emperor carried it out at once.

Men close to Napoleon were hoping for the Prince's recall to power, especially since it seemed that the Emperor had decided to dismiss the Duke de Bassano. He offered Caulaincourt the post, but he refused. "Yes, yes," exclaimed the Emperor, "you want to make me take Talleyrand back . . . Everyone wants it . . . Nor am I after all too far removed from such an idea, for he is an intelligent man. He has never been anyone's fool. But he is given over to, surrounded by, all that is most vile. My affairs would be up for auction . . . Do you think that this choice would make people believe in the peace?"

Caulaincourt answered in the affirmative, but the Emperor took up his grievances again. "Berthier swears by him only; Savary, the Police, Pasquier, doubtlessly for the sake of the results, see only Talleyrand.

. . . But I cannot employ a man with a history like Talleyrand's, nor one who spoke so badly when he thought I was in an embarrassing position. Moreover, people think that I am now . . . I do not want Talleyrand, though I give his talents their just due. He is the man who has the most in ideas and in shrewdness, but he is gold mixed with s—t." After a moment, he resumed, "Tell me frankly. Is it Talleyrand whom you wish to see in foreign affairs?"

"Yes, Sire."

He did not seem to give in, but he seemed decided a little later: "Well, I shall take Talleyrand, but you take charge of the negotiations. I want to remember only his good deeds. . . . He must separate from his wife. I do not want her to appear in the Foreign Relations building or at Court. Oh, add that I don't want any of his circle to appear at the Foreign Relations building."

26

WAITING FOR THE ALLIES

Talleyrand's refusal

IT WAS a great illusion on the Emperor's part to think that Talleyrand was so eager to return to public life that he would submit to these conditions. He was not at all anxious to join his fortunes to the Emperor's, since he was now so threatened, and was delighted to have this honorable pretext to reject these offers, which were, moreover, made in such harsh terms. When Mme de la Tour du Pin asked him about Napoleon the day after his return, he answered with unusual sharpness, "Oh, let me be with *your* Emperor. He's a finished man."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that he is a man who is hiding under a bed. . . . He has lost all his baggage. He has reached the end, and that's that."

He was harsh, but sincere. He considered the Emperor lost and he was not going to be lost with him. One can imagine if he had any desire to take his wife back to the Foreign Relations mansion, since he had been constantly keeping her at a distance from him, or if it would have cost him very much to sacrifice his friends, even dear ones. But he pretended to be deeply hurt, almost indignant, because of these conditions. "The Emperor is asking me to become disreputable, to abandon my friends. This is not the means of serving him well. For his sake and for mine, I refuse." He was obstinate, despite further offers, bearing himself with offended dignity.

Napoleon was annoyed by these refusals and finally said to the Duke de Vicence, "Tell Talleyrand . . . that it is time for him to reflect, that my kindness, my indulgence, can be worn out if I see that he is a declared enemy. Remind him that he is a Frenchman and that his Emperor has the right to command him." It seems that finally the Emperor wanted to talk with his former minister himself.

"I have just arrived at Saint Cloud, "Talleyrand wrote to the Duchess de Courlande on November 18. . . . "Everyone left, I was sent for, and the conversation was earnest. Same refusal on my part because of the

conditions made to me." Napoleon, who still wavered in his opinions about this "devilish fellow," was not resigned, however. Having finally called Caulaincourt to the Ministry of Foreign Relations, and having sent him to try to treat with the allies, he grew tired of waiting with no results. "Ah, if Talleyrand were there, he would get me out of it!" Indeed, it was Talleyrand himself who later quoted this flattering and most probable remark, but only to add, "He was wrong, for I could have got him out of it only by accepting the conditions of the enemy, which I should most probably have done, and if he had had the slightest military success that day, he would have disavowed my signature."

This was just. The Emperor, now resigned to sacrifice all of his Empire beyond its "natural boundaries," revolted at the idea that anything more could be asked of him. In spite of solemn declarations, Europe already intended to take advantage of the situation in order to get back all that had been lost, including the left bank of the Rhine. Only with these intentions did she consent to send plenipotentiaries to Châtillon-sur-Seine who were authorized to have discussions with Caulaincourt, but who imposed their wishes and dictated terms. Talleyrand encouraged them from Paris. "The powers," he wrote to the Duchess de Courlande (who he knew had relations with the Tsar), "cannot have too many sureties in the treaty they will make, if they do not wish to be obliged to begin all over again next year." Naturally he added, "This note is to be burned." No other document more clearly confirms his collusion with the invader.

"It was neither betraying nor conspiring"

Victory at first seemed most uncertain. The Emperor seemed to be caught in a vice. The armies of Schwarzenberg and Blücher surrounded him and he barely escaped by retreating from Brienne to Nogent-sur-Seine, where even he might for a moment have thought that all was lost. Napoleon's smashing return against Blücher, who was beaten in four encounters from Champaubert to Vauchamp, the victorious counter-offensive against Schwarzenberg, which was marked by the brilliant victory at Montereau, seemed to re-establish him. In reality, these successes, which were prodigious, considering the disproportion of the armies, only postponed the *dénouement* of the drama. For an instant Napoleon hoped to change it, when, having pushed Blücher's army back to the Aisne, he was ready to corner it on the banks and to destroy it, but it escaped him. It was then that he attemped the supreme maneuver which he thought might save everything. In an effort to keep Schwarzenberg from marching on Paris by attacking the allies'

rear, he thought that he could force them to turn tail and to enter battle under unfavorable conditions. In fact, it was only because of news from Paris that Schwarzenberg, who was already about to do as his adversary wished and was preparing his retreat to the east, resumed his march on the capital, according to instructions from the Tsar. Now that they knew they had friends who would deliver the city to them, the allies were ready for the downfall of the colossus.

"If defeated, Napoleon must vanish from the face of the earth; such is the fate of conquered usurpers. But if France is once invaded, what are the chances against her? What are the means to deal with the evils that threaten her? What form of government should she adopt if she resists this terrible catastrophe? These were serious subjects of meditation for all good Frenchmen. To surrender was a duty for those whom circumstance or ambition, if you will, had previously summoned to exercise influence on the country's fate. This is what I thought I had the right to do for several years, and as I saw the fearful *dénouement* approaching, I examined and I carefully and attentively united the resources that still remained to us. This was neither betraying Napoleon nor conspiring against him, although he more than once declared that it was. I never did any conspiring in my life, except when I had the majority of France as accomplice and when I was seeking the salvation of the Fatherland. . . ."

These are the most important lines of the *Memoirs,* which Talleyrand wrote many years after the events—and the most beautiful. What simplicity! What clarity! What order! What lofty serenity! What satisfaction with duty well done! What admirable expression of a conscience so at ease that it hardly needs to plead, so much does truth shine forth!

Solutions

In the winter of 1814, while 50,000 valiant Frenchmen, young soldiers and old veterans, were fighting under Napoleon against 300,000 foreigners, Talleyrand, shut up in his luxurious mansion on the Rue Saint-Florentin, sought every method to negate this heroic effort and to ruin its leader. But since he did not intend to be caught in his own snare, he worked for the security of his own fortune as well as for the "salvation of France."

He had diverse solutions in his fertile mind. When Napoleon I had succumbed, Napoleon II could be proclaimed; the little King of Rome would become Emperor under the regency of his mother. The support of Austria would certainly be needed to bring this situation about. Metternich wrote on March 18, 1814, "The wishes of Austria are in

favor of a dynasty so intimately linked with its own." Talleyrand, who was himself so intimately linked with Austria, would be given the presidency of the Council of Regents, that is to say, the real power, for how could anyone pay any attention to Marie-Louise? She was a poor young woman who was easily upset, and otherwise, a nothing at all. But, and it was a big but, what would be done with the redoubtable father? If he could get himself killed, everything would be settled, but this madman seemed to have told the truth when he rode his horse over a smoking bullet at Brienne and cried, "The bullet which will kill me has not yet been cast." Where could this father be put? If his son were reigning, how could he be interned or even exiled? And Talleyrand was not so sure that the "majority of France," as he later wrote, was "conspiring" with him. It is true that for the moment the weary country did not seem to be giving much support to the Emperor, who had formerly been so popular, but if the Emperor fell, the country might come back to him *en masse*. How could this formidable Napoleon be prevented from overshadowing the *régime,* even when he had been removed from the throne? And finally, what would Talleyrand gain by it all? He had money and power, but what he dreamed of, what he had always dreamed of, was a glorious restoration. He had rallied to his side many people who from 1789 to 1799 would have welcomed his death as a criminal. He received great lords and ladies, even cardinals and bishops. But he knew that they must have "passed sentence" on him; he wanted something better. If he became the restorer of the King, it would be the end of a bad dream. He would have enjoyed all the advantages of the Revolution, but the "opprobrium," as Louis XVIII had once said, would finally be cleared from his name, and, if the Bourbons, once re-established, should by chance decide to neglect him, he would have the right to say, as the tenth-century Périgord said to the tenth-century Capet, "Who made you king?"

"I do want the King"

Aimée de Coigny had resumed her visits. But as always, when he was with her the Prince seemed unaware of the fact that somewhere there was a Louis XVIII, an exiled but hopeful King, and she did not dare to remind him of it. He spoke affectedly of "Napoleon II" but one day, to encourage her, he said, "Perhaps we could create some patriotic ideas and a throne for Monsieur the Duke d'Orléans." This time, she did not hold back and cried, "No, Monsieur the Duke d'Orléans is a usurper of a better family than the other, but he is a usurper. Why not the brother of Louis XVI?"

He did not answer, but he must have found her remark about Louis-Philippe quite amusing, since he appropriated it and inserted it in his *Memoirs* as one of his own witticisms. "A usurper of a better family than Bonaparte," he wrote. She left, still deceived. But upon another visit, he decided to explain. "Mme de Coigny," he said, "I do want the King, but . . . ," and though she wished to brush aside the objection, he forced her to listen: "But it must be made known on what terms I am with that family. I get along well enough with Monsieur the Count d'Artois, because there is something between him and me which explains much of my conduct; but his brother does not know me. I don't want, I tell you, to expose myself to a pardon or to have to justify myself, instead of being thanked."

She hurried to inform her friend, Boisgelin, one of Louis XVIII's agents, and he prepared a letter to the King. Aimée took it to the Prince, who agreed to it. He now seemed relaxed, determined, full of enthusiasm which was rare in him. "Well, I am all for this affair," he said, "and from this time on, you can consider me as such. Let M. de Boisgelin keep up this correspondence, and let's work to deliver the country from this madman. As for me, I have means of knowing rather well exactly what he is doing. Caulaincourt (at Châtillon) and I have a cipher and a sign agreed upon by which he will let me know if the Emperor does or does not accept the peace proposals. Now we must talk about his wrong-doings, about his failure to keep all the promises he made in order to reign over the French people. One must no longer fear to pronounce the words 'nation,' 'rights of the people,' for it is a question of action, and experience restrains the expression of these words within just limits." Actually, he was toying with the idea of making the old republicans, who had taken refuge in the imperial senate, work for the restoration of the King, for it would be the senate that would speak in the name of the nation. Talleyrand had already told Aimée the scene that he imagined: "A senator would go up to the rostrum to denounce Napoleon for having violated the contract by the terms of which he had been elected Emperor and would have him named a disturber of the public peace." Then the assembly would be induced to create a constitutional monarchy. "Garat, Lambrecht, Lenoir-Laroche must be put into action," he laughed, "those patriarchs of the Revolution, who know so well how to demolish thrones with the words 'fatherland, tyranny, liberty.' " There had always been something of the trickster about him, and it seemed to him that it would be a highly amusing game to play.

Aimée de Coigny always thought that it was she alone who had won

him over to the side of the Restoration. She must have boasted about it, because Charles Maurras once called her "Mademoiselle Monk," which is saying a great deal, for Talleyrand played tricks upon her, too. "I have no means of getting in contact with him," he had told her in reference to Louis XVIII, yet for six months, through his uncle, the Archbishop of Rheims, he had been in communication with the Pretender and had sent him advice. Louis XVIII was inspired by this advice in the proclamation of January 2, dated from Hartwell, in which he offered himself to France, like a father ready to welcome all his children, even the most prodigal. When Caulaincourt had come to say farewell before leaving for Châtillon, the Prince had urged him to abandon Bonaparte to work for the "re-establishment of the Bourbons." But, always prudent, he no longer corresponded with the Duchess de Courlande except in oracular terms. "We are now," he concluded, "close to a terrible crisis. God protect us!" This was the time when Napoleon, beaten at La Rothière, was falling back upon Troyes, then Nogent. Had Talleyrand exposed himself too much? In any case, the Emperor had become alarmed. Joseph, who was the lieutenant-general of the Empire at the Empress' side, wrote to him that when the question of evacuating Paris came up, some were of the opinion that the Empress should not leave the capital for anything in the world. "If Talleyrand had anything to do with this opinion," wrote the Emperor from Nogent, ". . . it is a piece of treachery which they must be plotting. I repeat, distrust that man. I have known him for sixteen years, I have even had some partiality for him, but he is surely the greatest enemy of our family now that fortune abandons it." At last he saw clearly!

The plot

Now Napoleon seriously thought of having him arrested. He ordered the Duke de Rovigo, who had been Minister of General Police since Fouché's disgrace, to have the Prince closely watched, and, if he had the least proof of a serious plot, to imprison him immediately.

The plot was being spun most effectively on the Rue Saint-Florentin. Though the door seemed wide open to visitors of all parties, there was a private entrance for some of them who were in the Prince's confidence. From those who for various reasons had sworn to overthrow Napoleon, he had chosen Bourrienne, the Emperor's former secretary and friend whom he had had to banish from public life because of his speculation; the Abbé de Pradt, a contemptible person of whom Napoleon had made too much use, and whom he had disgraced in 1813; Baron Louis, a financier who, although he had become a high official, had a

grudge against Napoleon for not making him a minister and who was an ex-priest, bound to Talleyrand in memory of the mass of July 14, 1790. To these three men were joined two others who served Talleyrand as information and liaison agents: Count de Jaucourt, friend, confidant, and counselor, of King Joseph, who had always been opposed to Napoleon; and the Abbé de Montesquiou, for whom Talleyrand had kept an astonishing admiration ever since the Constitutional Assembly, and who, as an active agent of Louis XVIII, laid his plots with great daring in the early months of 1814—"the little serpent," Mirabeau called him as early as 1790. Through Joseph, Jaucourt was party to all of Napoleon's thoughts, as was Montesquiou to those of Louis XVIII. Bourrienne was intimate with Lavalette, director-general of the postoffice, whom he went to visit every morning and through whom he knew everything. Talleyrand saw these henchmen every day, and sometimes assembled them. They exchanged ideas, made plans, and laid traps.

If Savary had been as clear-sighted as he was faithful, he could easily have perceived and broken these plots. But, as I have said elsewhere, though he was devoted to the master, he had long been a most troublesome servitor. A fanatical partisan of long standing, he now meddled with ideas of his own policy. Talleyrand, who knew how to handle him, flattered him and lavished hypocritical caresses upon him, which the Minister of Police repaid with respect and, better still, with confidence. When he received the order to keep Talleyrand under surveillance and to arrest him, he was enraged. "What is the Emperor thinking of?" he asked Lavalette. "Do I not have enough royalists to keep in check in all of France? Does he want to throw the Faubourg Saint-Germain at me? Talleyrand is the only one who keeps him under control and from making blunders. I shall not execute this and later the Emperor will be grateful to me."

Entering the Talleyrand mansion rather unexpectedly one day, he found the Prince in conference with Pradt. They seemed to be upset, thinking for a moment that he had come to arrest them, but he made a joke of their embarrassment. "I see that you are setting about a conspiracy," he exclaimed laughingly. They entered into the joke and began to laugh, too. A few days later, Savary finally decided that they were indeed conspiring, but for what and for whom? The Emperor fell before this strange successor to Fouché could find out.

The "crutches" letter

Under these conditions, everything was velvet for Talleyrand. But he was too intelligent to think that the situation could be prolonged with-

out becoming more and more dangerous. The allies advanced when Napoleon ceased to hold them in check, retreated as soon as he reappeared and, even when he was again far away, took only a few steps of the march towards Paris. At this rate, they would not arrive within a year—might as well say never. They had to realize that with a little audacity they could finish the war. They would find enough helpers in Paris so that the gates would open to them at the first cannon shot fired on the plain of Saint-Denis.

On March 10, Schwarzenberg convoked a great military council at Chaumont. Blücher, he declared, was not budging, and as long as he was inactive, he, Schwarzenburg, would no longer risk this march upon Paris, which would expose him to attacks on the flanks and on the rear by Napoleon, whose whereabouts no one ever knew. In reality, the letters of the generalissimo of the coalition show him panic-stricken. "If I am conquered," he wrote to his wife, "what a triumph for Napoleon and what humiliation for the sovereigns forced to recross the Rhine at the head of a beaten army." This same day there arrived at General Quarters a person whose coming had great consequences. This was Baron de Vitrolles, a great friend of Dalberg's, who, while still an official of the Empire, served the Count d'Artois. Through Dalberg, he had reached Talleyrand, from whom he had received the mission which took him to the Tsar. He carried a little square of paper, seven centimeters by seven, which Nesselrode preserved in the archives with this notation, "Letter which determined the march upon Paris." The paper bore these words: "The person I am sending you is completely trustworthy. Listen to him and be grateful to me. It is time to be clearer. You are walking with crutches; make use of your legs and do what you want." Nesselrode, to whom the note was directed, took Vitrolles to the Tsar, to Metternich, and to Castlereagh. The Baron assured them that simply at the appearance of the allies before Paris the Emperor would be overthrown and the Bourbons recalled. Someone might have objected to Vitrolles that the letter was not in Talleyrand's handwriting. As a matter of fact, it had been written by Dalberg at Talleyrand's dictation, and when Vitrolles had expressed some surprise, Dalberg had said, "You do not know this monkey; he would not take a chance of burning the end of his little paw even if the chestnuts would be for him alone." The leaders of the allies had no doubt about the origin of this advice. They let Vitrolles go, however, without promising him anything, but as he spoke of rejoining the Count d'Artois, he was urged to return to Paris as soon as he could, for "the co-operation of Paris . . . is what must be obtained as soon as possible." The incident left the impression

upon the allied sovereigns and ministers that people were awaiting them who would guide and help them. This impression was strong, especially in the Tsar, and finally took effect, justifying the line that Nesselrode wrote on the famous "crutches" letter.

As for Talleyrand, he was trembling with impatience. But the allies did not yet throw away their "crutches." Through the Duchess de Courlande, he again warned them. "Prince Schwarzenberg," he wrote on the twenty-fourth, "with his 100,000 men has nothing before him but the Marmont and Mortier corps which are completely unable to resist, and they are making no move. That is really inconceivable. Austrian slowness has never more deserved to become proverbial."

Was this letter sent to the Tsar? Was it one of the bundle of letters which determined him on the twenty-fourth to send Schwarzenburg back into retirement and to do an about-face? Whatever it was, on the twenty-fourth, the allied army, leaving Napoleon in its rear, marched straight on Paris, where, on the twenty-sixth, the Marmont and Mortier corps, hurled back by this enormous mass, had their backs to the wall. The allies arrived before the capitol on the twenty-eighth and clashed in the suburbs with the vanguards of the two marshals, while in the Tuileries, the government deliberated flight. Talleyrand's hour was finally drawing near.

27

TALLEYRAND'S HOUR

Departure decided upon

THE PRINCE of Benevento paid a visit to his friends, the De Rémusats during the day of the twenty-seventh. He liked this household, which Napoleon had for a long time looked upon with favor, but which he disgraced when they were revealed to him as a couple of "plotters." The wife, nee Vergennes, a niece of Louis XVI's minister, was from the "two Faubourgs," and Talleyrand felt completely at ease with this sly, intelligent, sharp-witted woman, who had formerly pushed herself forward with Josephine, and who, after she had sincerely exalted Napoleon, had for several years been on the side of the malcontents, if not of the opposition. Talleyrand's disgrace, long before that of Josephine, had caused her to change sides, for she had a singular admiration for him which pleased him very much. She was a close relation of Pasquier, the ex-parliamentary councilor who had become Prefect of Police in 1810, and was a necessary link between him and Talleyrand, which the future chancellor did not like at all. This same day, the Prince found the Prefect of Police at his cousin's. Naturally, there was some talk about the approach of the allied armies. Paris could be encircled in forty-eight hours, and it seemed certain that resistance for more than three days was impossible, unless the Emperor could get through with his little army to take over the defense of the capital. But such an arrival would be miraculous, and could not be counted on. Under such conditions, was it wise for the government, especially the Empress and the King of Rome, to stay in Paris at the risk of being carried off? Would it not be better for the Empress to leave the city with the ministers while there was still time? The Prince thought so, affirming with conviction that anything was better than letting the Emperor's wife and son fall into the hands of the enemy. But the Prefect of Police maintained the opposite opinion vigorously. He knew Paris well, and the Empress' presence itself could galvanize the will and encourage resistance by touching hearts, while her departure, on the contrary, would

demoralize the population. She had to remain. Talleyrand seemed to be very much vexed. He must really have been so, for he, who was so secretive, revealed his designs by saying to the De Rémusats after Pasquier had left, "I should never have thought that M. Pasquier was such an enemy of the House of Bourbon; he has given advice which could be most adverse to it." This remark revealed what he had in mind; the departure of the government must have had an important part in the intrigue he was forming. Mme de Rémusat thought the remark was serious enough for her to inform her important cousin.

On the next day, the twenty-eighth, the Council of Regents met at half past eight in the morning. The question which had been discussed at the De Rémusats the day before arose, and all thought it was most pressing. King Joseph brought it up at the start without giving an opinion. Clarke, the Minister of War, was for departure, for since he had taken no serious measures for weeks for the defense of Paris, he despaired of putting up resistance. He seemed to be the only one with this point of view. If Pasquier had been at the meeting, he would undoubtedly have been surprised to hear Talleyrand, contrary to the opinion which he had defended at the De Rémusats, being louder than anyone else in his insistence that the government should remain. He later explained this surprising attitude, "I knew that the Empress distrusted me, and that if I advised departure, she would remain. I was for her remaining in order that she would depart." This is most likely. It is also likely that Joseph, remembering that Napoleon had written that Talleyrand was the "greatest enemy of the family," was tricked by this attitude, for he suddenly drew from his portfolio a letter which Napoleon had sent him from Nogent six weeks before in a feverish hour. In this letter the Emperor wrote that, if Paris were in danger, the Empress and his son should leave the capital and go to Rambouillet, along with the "great dignitaries, the ministers, the officers of the Senate." The Council seemed overwhelmed, but, since they were used to not discussing the master's orders, they yielded. It occurred to no one to object that since the letter was almost two months old, it perhaps might not be so imperative as it seemed. The departure for Blois by way of Rambouillet was fixed for dawn of the next day.

Talleyrand continued to play the false role he had given himself, and as he went out, he said that a great blunder had been made. Again he gave himself an alibi. He had the audacity to half reveal himself to Savary, saying, "Well, that's the end of it all, isn't that your opinion? . . . Now what side to take? It doesn't suit everyone to let himself be buried under the ruins of this edifice. It bears thinking about." The

Duke de Rovigo did not answer. He should instantly have put this dangerous man in a carriage under the escort of ten good gendarmes and have sent him off to Blois before the Empress herself.

The Empress left on the morning of the twenty-ninth with her son, Cambacérès, and the ministers. Joseph was to follow in a few hours. He also had the task of seeing to the departure of all the persons whom the Emperor, not unintentionally, had carefully enumerated: "the great dignitaries, . . . the officers of the Senate." Napoleon was thinking of one man in particular: the Vice-Grand Elector, the Prince de Bénévent. The Empress's departure itself caused great inconveniences; there would be immense ones if he were allowed to stay in Paris. Joseph seems not even to have thought of this. He allowed all the people designated by the Emperor a delay of twenty-four hours before leaving—enough time for all sorts of hocus-pocus.

The barricade at the "Porte de la Conférence"

Talleyrand was determined to stay in Paris, but he was too crafty to rebel openly against the order to leave. He must, however, have felt the cruelest anxiety during these dramatic hours. On the evening of the twenty-ninth, a battle was begun on the Romainville plateau to the northeast of Paris between the Russians and Marmont's troops. On the thirtieth, the allied armies encircled three-quarters of the capitol. Talleyrand longed for a more complete encirclement, which would give him the excuse to remain, but the west of Paris remained perfectly free and the road to Rambouillet was hopelessly open. At six o'clock in the evening, he called for Mme de Rémusat and took her to Pasquier's.

"Cousin," she said to him as soon as he received them, "you know that M. de Talleyrand has orders to leave to rejoin the Empress. Isn't it a great misfortune? There will be no one to treat with the foreigners, no one whose name bears any weight with them."

The only thing to do was to assemble a crowd of the people, or some who would appear as if they belonged to the people, who would oppose the exit of this valuable person. Pasquier seems to have received this singular request coldly. A Prefect of Police is not usually supposed to make people riot, but to keep them from rioting. But he suggested a rather good alternative which absolved him of all responsibility.

"You have an easier means of reaching your goal," he said, "one without danger. M. de Rémusat holds a command in the national guard and surely has charge of some barricade. Let M. de Talleyrand present himself there to leave and let M. de Rémusat do with his national guards what you are asking me to have done by the people."

On the next day, the thirtieth, according to the plan agreed upon, Talleyrand got into his berlin and drove from the Place de la Concorde towards the *Porte de la Conférence,* an exit from Paris on the Chaillot side. He reached it in ten minutes, and found the providential De Rémusat there with his battalion. While passports were being shown, De Rémusat declared that he took it upon himself to refuse permission to leave, and, playing the comedy in the best style, begged His Highness to go back home. His Highness was not insistent, but he intended to add some refinements to his alibi. Making his berlin turn half way around, he stopped at the first guard house to protest against the "violence" that had just been done him by this refusal to let him leave. The joke is that the commander of the post was naïve enough to become indignant, and, with too great zeal, he offered the Prince an escort which, under orders to give him every assistance, would conduct him to Rambouillet. Talleyrand thanked him, but nobly refused to prolong such a deplorable incident. A half hour later, he was back home.

With Marmont

He laid low during the rest of that desperate day, when the two marshals, thrown back from the outskirts of the city to the suburbs, fought simply for honor's sake. Informed hour by hour of what was going on, that evening he learned with great relief that the Duke de Raguse, though warned of the Emperor's approach, was making use of an order from Joseph to begin parleys about an armistice. At the Pantin barricade, the marshal had received Nesselrode, who, accompanied by Prince Orlof and Schwarzenberg's aide-de-camp, had taken him to La Chappelle. There they had signed articles of capitulation with Marshals Marmont and Moncey. Nesselrode went back to his sovereign to obtain his ratification. Marmont, accompanied by Orlof, returned to his home on the Rue de Paradis. He found it invaded by a hundred high officials, the two prefects, Pasquier and Chabrol, at their head. They had come for news, and were greatly relieved by the announcement of the capitulation. They gave the Duke de Raguse a sort of ovation as "the savior of Paris."

The Marshal was enjoying these felicitations and this homage, which somewhat went to his head, when a footman informed him that His Highness, the Prince de Bénévent, had come and asked for a private talk. Tearing himself away from the little crowd which filled the salons, Marmont hurried to receive the illustrious visitor in the dining room. Talleyrand had adopted the hypocritical pretext of asking if, as a result of the capitulation, communications were free enough for him to

leave Paris at last. What did he say to the marshal after that? One can only guess. It seems likely that he offered to work with him for the restoration of Louis XVIII, but the soldier, who remained a loyal servitor for a few hours more, refused. The seed of treachery which he had sown blossomed before long.

Actually, Talleyrand did not come to see Marmont. He intended above all to show himself, since everyone thought that he had left, as if to indicate to these people, almost all of whom were, like Marmont, ready to betray the Emperor, that the leader of the betrayal was indeed present. Crossing all the salons and creating a "great sensation," he approached Orlof, who was surrounded by people.

"Monsieur," he said, "will you lay at the feet of His Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, the Prince de Bénévent's profound expression of respect." It was one in the morning. At two, a messenger arrived, bearing the Tsar's ratification. At ten in the morning, the allied armies, the sovereigns at their head, would enter Paris.

The declaration of March 31

The Prince did not sleep much. At eight o'clock, he went to his toilette, and, draped in his quilted *peignoir,* he was having his hair powdered as usual by his valet, Courtiade, when it was announced to him that Count Nesselrode had come in the name of His Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, with an urgent message. Orlof had returned to the Tsar at Bondy and had told him of the Prince's presence in Paris and of what he had said at the Raguse house. Alexander had decided to seize this magnificent opportunity to negotiate Napoleon's ruin with a Frenchman, and when he had entered Paris, he went to visit Talleyrand. It was Nesselrode's mission to announce him. Overcome with joy, Talleyrand interrupted his toilette, threw himself upon Nesselrode, and embraced him so effusively that he literally covered him with powder. He said that he was profoundly honored to receive His Majesty. The Tsar, who had just entered Paris with his allies, the King of Prussia and Schwarzenberg, arrived at the Place de la Concorde in the afternoon, and immediately afterwards came to the house on the Rue Saint-Florentin. Talleyrand instantly informed his confidants, Dalberg, Louis, and Pradt, who an hour later met at his side. Together they prepared a "proclamation to the French," which was submitted to the Tsar for his signature. It was to the effect that the sovereigns would no longer treat with Napoleon Bonaparte, nor with any member of his family, and that the French nation would have to choose a provisory government, which would prepare a constitution, and with which Europe could treat. It

was expedient for the announcement to be made in Paris that day, so the manuscript was hurried to the printer's.

In brief, the declaration read:

"The armies of the allied powers have occupied Paris. The allied sovereigns respect the wishes of the French nation. They declare:

"That if the conditions of peace have to include the strongest guarantees for the restraint of Bonaparte's ambition, they ought to be looked upon all the more favorably, since, by a return to a sensible government, France would assure herself of repose. Consequently, the sovereigns proclaim:

"That they will not treat with Napoleon Bonaparte nor with any member of his family.

"That they will respect the integrity of the former France such as she was under her legitimate kings.

"They will recognize and will guarantee the constitution which the French nation will draw up. Consequently, they invite the Senate to appoint a provisory government at once which can see to the needs of the administration and the preparation of a constitution which will be suitable for the French people.

"I share the intentions which I have just expressed in common with all the allied powers."

The document was signed by Alexander.

It is an interesting fact that the Tsar introduced into this declaration which had been drawn up by Frenchmen words which gave the defeated country a bit of hope. After the words, "such as she was under her legitimate kings," he added in his own hand, "They (the allied sovereigns) can even do more, because they will always profess the principle that France must be great and strong for the happiness of Europe." If by this sentence the Tsar was not thinking of promising that France would keep some of the territory conquered under the Revolution, then it was simply a lie. There is every reason to believe, however, that, in the euphoria of those hours he had just lived through, Alexander was sincere. How else can it be explained that Talleyrand, treating in the name of France, did not make more of this sentence, which he allowed to be introduced without showing the least gratitude or even seeming to attach the least importance to it?

"Louis XVIII is a principle"

The reason is that at the time he could think of winning nothing else from the Tsar but the restoration of the Bourbons.

When the text, modified in such a favorable way, had been sent to the printer's (during the night it was posted on every wall in Paris), Talleyrand raised the question.

In his *Memoirs,* he deals at great length with this memorable episode in his life. Only through these pages is it known how he pleaded the cause of the Bourbons, whose return he had once feared and whose representatives he had scorned. Naturally, he makes it seem as if his thoughts, intentions, and words were all noble and grand.

"It had to be found out exactly what France wanted," he wrote, "and what Europe wanted. In the midst of the horrors of the invasion, France wanted to be free and respected, which meant wanting the House of Bourbon in the legitimately prescribed order . . . With the House of Bourbon, France would cease being gigantic and would again become great."

This is a brilliant and not unprofound statement. It is Talleyrand at his best and expresses an idea that was always dear to him, though he often betrayed it.

It was upon the principle of legitimacy that he based the plea which he made to the Tsar and of which he gives the substance: "Neither you, Sire, nor the allied powers, nor I, whom you believe to have some influence, none of us can give France a king. France is conquered, conquered by your arms, and yet you have not that power even today. No matter what king were imposed, it would be the result of an intrigue or of force; neither one nor the other would be enough. To make something durable which would be accepted without protest, action must be based on a principle. There is only one. Louis XVIII is a principle. He is the legitimate King of France."

Alexander seemed convinced by this man, so suddenly devoted to principles. "How do I know," he simply objected, "that France wants the House of Bourbon?"

"By a vote, Sire, which I shall have taken in the Senate and the result of which Your Majesty will see immediately."

"Are you sure of it?"

"I will answer for it, Sire."

A circumstance remarkably favorable to his machinations arose. Thinking that he would stay at the Elysée, Alexander had simply intended to visit Talleyrand for an hour, but even before he reached the Rue Saint-Florentin, he heard the rumor that the Elysée palace, which was thought to be mined, would not be the most restful residence. He had then asked Talleyrand to be his host. Nothing could have suited Talleyrand better. Beyond the prestige that would be reflected upon

him, the fact that Alexander was under his roof would allow him to control the situation.

Talleyrand gets rid of the trouble-makers

He began to dispose of the trouble-makers. While the sovereigns were still reviewing their troops at the Champs-Elysées, Caulaincourt, in great distress, arrived at Talleyrand's house. Napoleon had entrusted him with a mission of supreme importance. Having received news of the allied march upon Paris, Napoleon had led his little army towards the capital, and, leaving his troops at Troyes, he had hastened on by post with several companions. He had been stopped at Fromenteau, near Juvisy, four hours from Paris, by the news of the capitulation. He had then asked the Duke de Vicence to go get information, and, if need be, to negotiate, and he himself went to Fontainbleau. Learning that the Tsar was going to stay with the Prince de Bénévent, Caulaincourt had gone to the Rue Saint-Florentin. It was not without some nervousness that he saw Talleyrand, who was then awaiting the sovereigns. When he was asked to obtain an interview with the Tsar for him, Talleyrand seemed as surprised as he was vexed. The Emperor's return disconcerted him, but the arrival of the Duke de Vicence troubled him especially. Until this moment, Caulaincourt had nourished blind illusions about Talleyrand, and, yielding to his influence which often turned him aside from the right path, had often served him, while still remaining faithful to Napoleon. He saw Talleyrand's action simply as a fortunate restraint to the master's excessive ambitions, and since, like many others, he thought that Talleyrand was on irremediably bad terms with the Bourbons and thus forever allied to the imperial *régime,* he thought him incapable of working for the downfall of the government. It is incredible that he retained these illusions, even though he had seen his machinations at Erfurt and had often received alarming confidences from him. When he hurried to Paris, it was with the idea that Talleyrand would begin negotiations with the allies which, by means of great sacrifices, would save the dynasty, if not the Emperor. He quickly perceived his great error. Talleyrand was very cold, and, contrary to his usual manner with Caulaincourt, surly, harsh, and even rude.

"The Emperor ruined us by not letting you make peace at Châtillon," was his answer to the Duke's request.

"In our misfortune," the latter asked, "can he count on you?"

"You will learn that two days ago I did everything to save his throne, to hold back the Empress and his son, but the Emperor gave secret orders which spoiled everything."

"This is not the time to concern ourselves with his errors. He has sent me to Emperor Alexander to defend him, to sign the peace which everyone wants. Will you help me in our misfortune? . . . Will you sacrifice the Empress, the King of Rome, the real interests of France?"

"At the last Council, I did everything to save them. . . . Unfair as the Emperor has been to me, I fought almost alone for him. . . . He has lost completely, even in the Council of Regents."

Seeing the Prince's face so impassive, firm, and unrelentingly hostile, Caulaincourt finally understood. "Convinced that we no longer spoke the same language," he wrote, "I withdrew."

He persisted in his mission, however, and hardly was the famous conference between the great allied leaders and Talleyrand over, when he succeeded in reaching the Tsar, who simply showed him the declaration which was being posted everywhere. Caulaincourt had to give up. He had hardly gone when Talleyrand returned to the *grand salon,* his satisfaction showing through his usual impassibility. "M. de Caulaincourt has been definitely refused," he said joyfully to the persons present.

On the evening of that historic day, the Talleyrand mansion was blazing with light. While the sovereigns were being acclaimed at the Opera by Frenchmen who had no sense of national feeling nor of propriety, Talleyrand was receiving a great crowd in his salons. High officials, members of the Senate, royalist agents, foreign diplomats, all rubbed elbows. The little group of the faithful were there, too: Dalberg, Jaucourt, Pradt, Bourrienne, Louis, and less important supernumeraries. They solicited adherences which were already sworn, and discouraged fidelities which were already shaky. They worked on the senators "of the left," who, it was said, would "defeat despotism." This was only the first act. There was not a word about those which would follow, still less of the *dénouement,* the recall of the Bourbons.

That very night, when no one slept because the allies were camping in the streets, messengers of the Prince de Bénévent hastened through Paris, taking the senators summons for the next day. It would be more just to say to *some* senators. The vote had to be taken without debate, and it was wiser to have only trusted men participating. Of 140 senators, only 63 had been lined up, and these were of all parties. Talleyrand had his "patriarchs of the Revolution," Garat, Lambrecht, Sieyès, Lanjuinais, Grégoire, and Roger-Ducos. It would be a triumph to make these people, among whom were several regicides, collaborate in the restoration of the brother of Louis XVI. But this was not the real reason. Talleyrand intended to keep control of his operation until the end, and, consequently, not to let himself be taken over by the royalists. When the Count

de Sémallé, emissary of the Count d'Artois, also presented himself to speak to the Tsar, Talleyrand got rid of the agent of the Bourbons as he had the agent of Bonaparte. Sémallé, to whom Alexander's door was closed, had to be content with giving Talleyrand himself some letters from the Count d'Artois. But to emphasize his position, Talleyrand told him in an off-hand way that it would be a good idea for the Bourbons to assume the national colors and to adopt the tricolor flag. When Sémallé protested, Talleyrand exclaimed with sudden bitterness, "Do you think, Monsieur, that the interests of a nation can be sacrificed to the *amour-propre* of a family?" Talleyrand was already setting himself up as a "maker of kings."

President of the provisory government

The Senate, or at least the minority which had been called, met at the Luxembourg on April 1. The summons read: "The Prince de Bénévent has been invited by His Majesty, the Emperor Alexander, to present the proposals of the Powers to the Senate. He will be at the Senate Building at 3:30. He begs you to be so good as to be present." A French newspaper in London wrote that "the Senate assembled by order of the Emperor of Russia." This was only a remark which pointed out a fact that Talleyrand never intended to hide, for it was a means of protecting himself and of absolving himself of responsibility in the future.

The senators simply named a provisory government, composed of the Prince de Bénévent, naturally enough, General de Beurnonville, Senator de Jaucourt, the Duke de Dalberg, and the Abbé de Montesquiou—a choice that had clearly been dictated by the Prince himself. Chateaubriand wrote that Talleyrand composed the government with his "whist partners." Of course, he had himself given the presidency, which was really the power of absolute control. At last he was officially the only master! During this short meeting of the Senate, there was no discussion of the Emperor's downfall nor of the King's recall, but the election of the Abbé de Montesquiou, who had always been Louis XVIII's agent, sufficiently clarified the nature of the "revolution" which had taken place. Talleyrand's joy was great when all the former regicides voted ostensibly for the nomination of a provisory government, which already implied Napoleon's removal and the enthronement of Louis XVIII.

The next day, the Senate, now compromised, went even farther on the path along which Talleyrand had led it. When it met on April 2 at 9 p.m., Lambrecht, a man of the left, made a proposal for Napoleon's removal, which was immediately voted.

The same day, the provisory government sent out an "Address to the French Armies," urging them to separate from "a man who is not even French." Fontanes, formerly the master's most servile courtier, was the author of this outrageous statement. Then they succeeded in winning over Marmont, who betrayed his friend on April 4 and brought his troops into the allied ranks, thus making it completely impossible for Napoleon to march on Paris from Fontainbleau. In announcing the event to the Duchess de Courlande, Talleyrand wrote, "It is the result of our proclamations." Behind this simple line can be detected his evil joy as he saw everyone from Fontanes to Marmont abasing himself. Soon his own treason, which had at least been committed at some risk, began to seem almost noble in comparison to so many ignoble "desertions."

Napoleon did not have to wait for Talleyrand to declare himself as the contriver of his downfall to realize that he was behind all these desertions, but disheartened by these minor betrayals, he even excused that of the Prince de Bénévent. "He betrayed religion, Louis XVI, the Constitutional Assembly, the Directory, why did I not have him shot?" he said at first, but soon he began to feel some indulgence towards him. "Actually, he served me very well while he served me; perhaps I broke off with him rather lightly; I mistreated him then. He must have been tempted to take revenge. A mind as shrewd as his could not fail to recognize that the Bourbons were approaching and that they alone could assure his vengeance . . . I made a great error. Having brought him to the degree of discontent at which he had arrived, I ought to have shut him up or kept him always at my side." And a few days later, he said, "I pardon Talleyrand, for I mistreated him. He would not have remained in France if I had triumphed. The Bourbons will do well to employ him."

One is inclined to be less forbearing than the Emperor was, but, as I have said, he admired intelligence. He was so deeply interested in life that he observed intently a "fine piece of work" even when it was directed against him and led to his downfall.

PART FOUR

THE MINISTER OF THE RESTORATION 1814-1815

28

THE PROVISORY GOVERNMENT AND THE CONVENTION OF APRIL 23

Talleyrand in power

THE PROVISORY government, under Talleyrand's direction, was in power for twelve days, and during these twelve days, events hastened on, all of them fitting in with his plans. His removal was a simple manifestation which the Emperor was determined to resist, but everyone about him was giving in. Sustained by the admirable devotion of his troops, he was preparing to leave for Paris at their head on April 4. Suddenly the marshals burst into his room and, after a tragic colloquy with Ney, Napoleon, discouraged by the attitude of these important soldiers, signed his abdication but retained the rights of his son. But the next day, Marmont's defection took place, a fact which determined the Tsar to reject the marshals' requests in favor of the King of Rome. Thus he put an end, materially and morally, to any fancy that Napoleon might have had of going back on his abdication, since his conditions had been rejected. Exposed and handed over by Marmont's defection, the Emperor was more impeded in his action than ever and wounded to the quick. This betrayal by his oldest friend, whom he had overwhelmed with honors, had broken his heart. Having failed in their mission, the marshals came back from Paris. They insisted flatly that he agree to a pure and simple abdication. He gave in and signed the paper on the sixth.

Meanwhile, the Senate put the finishing touches to its work by "freely recalling Louis-Stanislas-Xavier to the throne," on the condition that he would accept the constitution which the Assembly was hastily drawing up. This constitution imposed on the King most of the institutions and principles of the Revolution, as well as the personnel of the Empire, especially the Senate itself, which, in the most shameless fashion, intended to perpetuate itself, regicides included, as a hereditary and richly endowed Chamber of Peers. The royalists grew indignant, and there

was some fear of a conflict that might ruin the maneuvers which Talleyrand had been conducting so well for a week. After driving the Senate to proclaim Louis XVIII as King and to tie him down at one and the same time, he intended to become a mediator between the Senate and public opinion.

The Emperor was no longer to be feared. After Caulaincourt had won for him the treaty which gave him possession of the island of Elba, Napoleon, having attempted suicide, made ready to depart. But Talleyrand now feared the excesses of the royalist passions. This was favored by the pitiable degradation of the former officials of the Empire, especially of the great soldiers. Talleyrand's house, which for a week was the seat of the government, was full of renegades.

"On April 12," Talleyrand wrote, "the Count d'Artois, to whom I had sent M. de Vitrolles at Nancy, made his entry into Paris and assumed the title of lieutenant-general of the realm. He showed me the same benevolence as on the night of July 18, 1789, when we separated, he to emigrate, I to throw myself into the whirlpool which finally brought me to the head of the provisory government." Twenty-five years! A century! For these years counted for so much.

The Count d'Artois found the members of the government at the Bondy barricade. Speaking in their name, the president said, "Monseigneur, the happiness which we feel on this day of regeneration will be beyond all expression if Monsieur will receive the homage of our sacred emotion and of our respectful devotion with the celestial graciousness which characterizes his august house." While he poured out these phrases of deferential adulation, Talleyrand, whose bad leg was hurting him, leaned against the prince's horse and leg in the most familiar fashion. Bending towards him with his most gracious smile, the prince uttered a few words of thanks. Since he thought these words too banal, that same evening Talleyrand asked his assembled friends for some quotation from Henri IV which could be used in the account in the *Monitor*. Beugnot, it is true, wondered if it would be possible to put words into Charles' mouth without offending him.

"That's not the difficulty," laughed Talleyrand. "Make it good, suitable to the person and the moment, and I promise that Monsieur will accept it so thoroughly that within two days he will think he said it, and he will have said it!" Thus reassured, Beugnot, after several attempts, hit upon a worthy statement. "No more divisions! Peace and France! At last I see it again! Nothing is changed except there is one Frenchman more." The saying had a great success, and the future Charles X did not wait two days to think himself the author of it.

Talleyrand truly enjoyed every sort of satisfaction, both great and small.

The greatest was that since the government continued to exist under the name of Provisory Council of State, he was still at the head of it with *carte blanche* to conclude the peace and to sign the armistice which prepared for it. Not knowing to what degree Louis XVIII would confirm the decisions made by his amiable brother, Talleyrand was determined to precipitate matters. He began discussions about the armistice with the representatives of the powers on the nineteenth, and signed the convention on the twenty-third.

The problem of the peace

It is astonishing that he could conclude it so quickly, on the very day of the King's arrival. After twenty-two years of war, the convention could be nothing but a simple armistice. When the last phase of the long drama started by the Empire began in 1812, France held continental Europe from the coast of Spain to the Niemen and from Naples to Hamburg. Then in 1812, 1813, and 1814, she had retreated until her troops, which had once gone as far as Cadiz, Naples, and Moscow, were driven to Paris by the European coalition, but more than 100,000 of her soldiers were still defending themselves to the east of the Rhine and from Escaut, in some fifty strongholds, like islands battered by the flood. Some determined leaders, such as Davout in Hamburg and Carnot in Anvers, were still resisting the blockade, throwing back assaults, and until the last moment, affirming their valor and strength by counterattacks. Clearly these places had to be given over to the victorious enemy when peace was made, but France could use them as negotiable pledges at the peace table. To hand them all over before the peace treaty would be to lose these pledges and to compromise the future, a point to which I shall return.

Talleyrand does not seem to have thought of it. It is impossible, however, that a man of such intelligence should not have thought of it.

Here we come up against a very serious question, the most serious one which faces a biographer of Talleyrand, and since, to a certain degree, the armistice anticipated the peace treaty and thus prepared for the transactions of the Congress of Vienna, we must pause over it for some moments.

Talleyrand has had many very harsh critics for over a century, but he has also had ardent defenders and apologists. His accusers have certainly held good cards, as those who have read to this point will see. What denials! What betrayals! And what inexcusable denials and what base betrayals, made even more dishonorable because of the profits they

brought him, money in millions! Even the most indulgent historians have always had to face the harsh fact that he betrayed his class, his church, the King, the Republic, and the Emperor, and with each betrayal added to the "immense fortune" which he once said was what he expected from his part in public affairs. But for a century there have also been historians who have said, "What difference does it make, since all these treacheries placed him in such a position in 1814 that, thanks to his unequaled diplomatic genius, he was able to some degree to save France from an unprecedented catastrophe."

Let us try to be just. France had been crushed, and added to that was the aggravating circumstance that for twenty-two years she had crushed Europe by her victories. She had to be defended against the reactions that were bound to take place, and something had to be done to restrain the people, formerly conquered, humiliated, mortified, sometimes oppressed, who would have sought ten-fold retaliation. There was not only ill-feeling to be allayed, but also distrust to disarm, which was almost as dangerous. The victories of France did not date from Napoleon nor from the Revolution. For centuries she had been the "insolent nation" as far as Europe was concerned.

To win respect for conquered France, to reduce her losses and damages to a minimum, to overcome distrust, bitterness, and cupidity, to restore her to the rank she had formerly held among the nations, and all within a few months, was certainly a magnificent task which demanded a mind without timidity. Talleyrand, it must be said, deserved a great deal from his country simply for undertaking it.

France's trump cards

Despite appearances, France still held some master trump cards which had not been lost in her recent defeat.

First of all, despite everything, she had the sympathy of the "people." She had made herself the champion of liberty in 1789, and "by striking down the tyrants, had broken the chains of the slaves." There was truth in this Revolutionary phraseology. France had injected a new spirit into old Europe which had set free many minds and had won her the ardent love of many people. Even the "peoples" who had revolted against her domination after 1807 were already, once Napoleon had been disposed of, uneasy to see France threatened with ruin or simply with being put *hors de combat*. These "peoples," it is true, did not have much voice with thrones and chancelleries, but still they had an unperceived influence upon those who governed them. To eliminate France from

the concert of nations would be like closing the door upon aspirations which in spite of everything would one day arise again.

This suppression of France—and it was the second card to play—could not for long be expedient to the chancelleries themselves. They had quarrels among themselves and if the need to unite against French hegemony had put an end to their rivalries, it could last only for a moment. While the "lesser powers," which had always looked to France for support, considered her disappearance a calamity, the great powers did not delay in giving a country of such value some place in their egotistical calculations. The very fact that the Napoleonic empire was being liquidated brought a new sharpness to the struggles of other days, which had been forgotten for so short a time. The fallen colossus was to be cut up; since everyone intended to snatch some important piece, this would clearly cause new conflicts which, added to the old competitions, would divide the conquerors. One did not need to be clever to see this fact. What was needed was a mind that could enlarge these divisions, and, as a result of them, that could restore France to her place in the concert of nations.

There is a general truth to be faced. For centuries France had held the first and finest place in "Christendom," so that she could not be excluded from it without unbalancing this "Christendom." It was not military glory which had won her such prestige; it was the emanation of her spirit and the influence of her wealth. France was the wealthiest nation in men and material, and thus she was the chief power in European "Christendom." To weaken France to the point of paralyzing her would lead to the ruin of Europe. This was the feeling at each crisis of France. When Napoleon fell, it was perceptible in princes as well as in peoples. As the Tsar saw spontaneously on March 21, "a great and powerful France" was necessary "for the happiness of Europe." And I shall add that if her "insolent" victories had offended the vanquished for twenty-two years, they also still made her important. She still had an aura of glory which could arouse anger but which demanded respect, and this prestige of untold value was added to that of spirit and wealth.

Finally—France's last trump card—by the restoration of her dynasty she seemed to impose an obligation upon the thrones which the chancelleries were not long in perceiving. All of these thrones had almost tottered under the force of the whirlwind which came from Paris. Bonaparte had not calmed this storm except within his own country, and it had continued to overthrow monarchies. The Bourbons now seemed to be about to put an end to the era of tempests, but everyone remem-

bered the recent past, and France would forever be the country in which the Revolution had originated and in which it could be reborn and let loose upon Europe again. The kings had one guarantee in 1814: the French nation's acceptance of a restoration which many thought was imposed upon it and which would be difficult to uphold. Could it be if the Bourbons began by endorsing a too humiliating peace, and could not the "Courts" be made to see the force of this argument which ought to concern them most particularly? Thus France, for whom the Revolution had first won the sympathy of the masses, could now appeal to the kings' fear of a new coming of that Revolution as a fatal consequence of a too severe peace.

These were the trump cards which circumstances placed in the hands of those who accepted the mission of warding off a hateful peace. Was Talleyrand aware of them and did he play them?

He noticed some of them and played them, but if he was capable of playing them cleverly, certain personal inclinations and ideas made him incapable of considering and using them all in an operation of the greatest extent and import.

The boundary problem

The goal of this operation was a most daring one. Talleyrand's own words at Erfurt should be recalled: "The Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees are the conquests of France. The rest is the conquest of the Emperor; France is not holding on to them." Perhaps the Tsar, whom this declaration had filled with joy, was thinking of it on March 31 when to the promise to "respect the integrity of the old France, such as she was under her legitimate kings," he spontaneously added that "they (the allied sovereigns) might even do more. . . ." Playing the hand well would mean that in exchange for the formal renunciation of "the conquests of the Emperor" (which were still represented by the occupied strongholds), the preservation of the "conquests of France," including the "natural boundaries," would be obtained.

By the armistice signed on April 23, Talleyrand gave up not only all the places occupied to the east of the Rhine from Danzig to Hamburg, but also, which was serious in another fashion, all those which France held in the Rhineland and in Belgium from Mainz to Anvers. To give up Danzig, Hamburg, and some forty other places in Germany simply meant losing some important pledges, but to give up Mainz and Anvers meant prejudicing the treaty itself by revealing that the French government was going to take no interest in the "natural boundaries." The fact is most apparent, and it is astonishing that Talleyrand uttered a

satisfecit which even sounded like a sigh of relief. "I have finished my armistice," he wrote to the Duchess de Courlande on the evening of the twenty-third. "It's already a good thing. Later, a month from now, we shall have the peace."

He intended to justify himself in the eyes of Louis XVIII a year later for having thus compromised the future before his arrival—which seems to show that the sovereign himself was at least surprised. In his *Memorandum on the Congress of Vienna,* Talleyrand wrote that "the Convention of April 23 was a necessary and politic act." "Confidence had to take the place of the allies' power, and for that to be accomplished, they had to be inspired with it," he added. "This armistice deprived France of nothing which could be of present or even future help. It deprived her of nothing which she could have had the slightest hope of keeping." These last words may be contested, but that was not the problem. The problem was that when she negotiated the treaty, France should not have lost her pawns and should not have sacrificed the conquests of the Revolution in advance.

Talleyrand's personal ideas

One cannot, in my opinion, accuse Talleyrand of thoughtlessness or of blindness, for he saw very clearly a settled plan which he followed unswervingly. Talleyrand did not want to hold on to the conquests of the Revolution. He condemned them as the result of a risky, reckless, even obnoxious policy, which he had always criticized with more or less discretion. Talleyrand would have described the great drama of the "revolutionary wars" as "adventures" long before Guglielmo Ferrero. France before 1789 gloried in her frontiers which had been won by her kings, had been uncontested by her adversaries, and had been sanctioned by time. At the Constitutional Assembly, the Bishop of Autun was one of those who, despite Mirabeau's protests, voted for Robespierre's motion to declare the frontiers of 1789 "eternal," and proclaiming "the renunciation of conquests." He was still the same Talleyrand when he wrote in 1792, "France enclosed by her own boundaries (those of 1791); she owes it to her glory, to justice, to her interest, and to that of the peoples she has set free."

His thoughts were not much different twenty-two years later. He did not change his mind because after 1799 he seemed to agree with the hegemonical policies of his master. Let us do him the justice to admit that he made timid attempts to restrain this policy, and that when he did not succeed, he did not conceal his disapproval. By having lent his co-operation to the constitution of a vassal Italian state and a vassal

Confederation of the Rhine, he agreed to such irruptions of power. On the contrary, he considered even the conquests of the Revolution beyond the old frontiers disastrous because they opened the way for those of the Empire. Thus he accepted a treaty which shut France in behind her old frontiers.

He was sincere when he maintained in his memorandum to Louis XVIII that the spontaneous renunciation of the conquests of the Revolution seemed to him the only way to overcome the distrust of Europe, and that, thanks to such a prompt and considerable sacrifice, he had been able to allay the spirit of bitterness and of revenge, to win the confidence of certain powers, and thus to play the role of disinterested mediator at the Congress of Vienna. This is the reason that on April 23 he deliberately and almost without discussion gave up all the strongholds which France possessed beyond her old frontiers, including Mainz and Anvers. But thus France came to make the treaty not with her hands free of shackles but with her hands empty of all pawns, and she was at the mercy of the representatives of the victorious powers. The armistice prepared the treaty, almost dictated it. But Talleyrand, pretending to nothing more, thinking only of a treaty conceived in the spirit which I have just described, far from fearing to take responsibility for it, aspired only to have France return to what he called "the policy of wisdom."

29

THE KING'S RETURN AND THE TREATY OF PARIS

Talleyrand meets Louis XVIII

THE KING had to keep Talleyrand at the head of the government if his policy were to be realized, and the arrival of Louis XVIII in Paris caused him some apprehension. He was not unaware of what the former Count de Provence thought of him, of the unrelenting antipathy which had been so important in making him fight against the House of Bourbon in other days. Louis XVIII in his turn was not unaware of the active hostility that had been nourished by the remote descendant of the Périgords towards the remote descendants of Hugh Capet. If he did not know exactly the role of this "traitor" in the "assassination" of the Duke d'Enghien and in the downfall of the Bourbons in Spain, since the documents had been destroyed, he did know that he was not a stranger to either one of these affairs. But it was always enough for him simply to recall the role this "blacksheep of the Périgords" had played during the Revolution for him to return to his harsh saying of 1800: "The opprobrium of an illustrious family." If he had become convinced that the co-operation of this man whom he had called a "blackguard" was necessary to the restoration and duration of the throne, he still had not changed his opinion of him. He never ceased making remarks about this rogue who, after betraying all his masters, had come back to him with the pretension of taking charge of everything.

Louis arrived at Calais on April 24. There he found messengers who gave him letters from Talleyrand, and all during his trip, he kept receiving notes in which he declared his devotion and offered himself without reservation. "M. de Talleyrand," one of them reads, "places all his happiness in devoting his whole life to the service of the King and asks nothing for himself. He deems himself necessary in foreign relations, and asks to be in that office."

The King arrived at Compiègne on the twenty-ninth. Talleyrand was awaiting him at the château and asked for an audience at once.

The King had now decided to "employ him," but he did not want to seem anxious. Therefore he kept him at a distance. He let him cool his heels for almost three hours in the crowd of people who had come to greet the new master. Finally he was admitted.

Though he was usually so much at his ease, it is hard to imagine that he was not somewhat discomfited when he appeared before the head of the House of France. Unfortunately, it is only through Talleyrand that we know what Louis' first words were. Seated behind his desk, Louis said, "I am glad to see you. Our houses date from the same period. My ancestors were more clever. If yours had been more so than mine, you would say to me today, 'Take a chair, draw near, let us speak of our business.' Today it is I who say to you, 'Sit down and let us talk.'" There is nothing improbable about this little speech. The King was an intelligent man and he gave a further proof of this intelligence by going back to Hugh Capet and Adelbert de Périgord in the tenth century, made no mention of what had happened in the last ten years of the eighteenth century, and thus put Talleyrand at his ease.

Then they spoke of their affairs. Everyone in the château was on tenterhooks about the conversation and there were thousands of rumors about it by evening. Some said that the King had been curious about certain situations in which Talleyrand had been involved.

"I wonder at your influence upon everything which has happened in France," he said. "How were you able to overthrow the Directory and the colossal power of Bonaparte just now?"

"Goodness, Sire," replied Talleyrand, "I really did nothing in all that. It is something inexplicable which I have within me and which brings misfortune to the governments which neglect me."

The remark is clever, but I doubt its authenticity. Would Talleyrand have been at such ease during this first conversation that he could have made such a bold and such a threatening joke?

At any rate, Louis had no need of such a clear warning to be reminded of the necessities of the hour. He had to put up with Talleyrand, and he did. Talleyrand would remain at the head of the government, as he had been under the lieutenant-general, for as long as it suited the King. Talleyrand asked nothing more, and as he left the interview, he said to Beugnot, "We have parted content with each other." But twenty years afterwards, he declared that during the conversation he got proof that "Louis XVIII was the most arrant liar ever known on earth,"—to which his confidant would have had the right to reply, "Prince, you forget yourself."

It was he who at Saint-Ouen presented the Senate to Louis XVIII,

which was waiting for him to confirm its "income," as a reward for having recalled him. "In returning to the throne," Talleyrand declared, "you are succeeding to twenty years of ruin and misfortune," —twenty years in which he had collaborated wholeheartedly. So many platitudes, which were useless, anyway, because Louis XVIII had made up his mind, deserved some recompense. In the *Monitor* of May 13 appeared the nomination of Monsieur "the Prince de Talleyrand" (such was the title he bore henceforth) as secretary of state for the foreign office. The same evening, he took his oath of fidelity to Louis XVIII. "Sire, it is the thirteenth; I hope it is the last," is an amusing saying which has been attributed to him, but it is hardly probable.

The Duchess d'Angoulême gave Talleyrand such a frigid reception that he was most embittered by it. The Prince de Condé, grandfather of the Duke d'Enghien, who was said to be much weakened by age, took, or pretended to take, the minister for his uncle, the ex-archbishop of Rheims, and asked what had become of that "wicked rogue," his nephew. Even the Count d'Artois grew cold when faced with the obligation of frequent dealings with his old but embarrassing friend.

The *émigrés* returned *en masse* and invaded the Tuileries. There were many among them who did not want anything to do with this "wicked rogue" for whom Condé asked. But it was less their hostile attitude than their general behavior which sometimes disturbed Talleyrand. They were turning the King, the court, and certain ministers towards a reactionary policy, which would inevitably bring suffering to all those who had had part in the Revolution. The King had rejected the constitution which had been voted by the Senate, had removed the most "repentant" regicides from office, had admitted officers of the Condé and Vendée corps to the army, and in every field, allowed his brother's imprudent friends to condemn the men and the institutions which had been accepted at first.

Talleyrand was no longer head of the government, and not even the leading minister. Blacas alone had any influence with Louis XVIII. "That of the Prince de Bénévent is of no account at the moment," wrote a foreign ambassador. He complained about it himself. Well informed persons thought, nevertheless, that he would retain his office, and that the King, even though he severely limited his sphere of activity, was too much aware of his real talents to do without him. But he prudently shut himself up in his office and kept on looking for an alibi for the future. There he prepared the peace treaty, then the negotiations which had to be undertaken with the powers about the great settlement at Vienna. He intended to win gratitude by rendering great services "to

the country" and to King Louis. This consideration directed his policy towards certain solutions which he defended at Vienna. His diplomatic functions absorbed him completely for eight months.

The Treaty of Paris

The peace treaty was signed at Paris on May 30, only five weeks after the armistice. The Convention of April 23 had, as I have said, eliminated long debates in advance. From the moment that the stronghold from the Oder to the Elbe, as well as those of Belgium and the Rhineland, had been handed over, an end was put to the only question which could cause conflict among the representatives of Europe and of France. When some of Louis XVIII's followers tried to obtain an important part of Belgium from the allies, Lord Castlereagh opposed them bitterly in the name of England, and it was Talleyrand who withdrew this "pretension" from debate in order to end the dispute. Since France no longer claimed her natural boundaries, there was nothing to discuss but some "scraps" of territory (the terminology is Lacour-Gayet's) which had been possessed formerly, and which Talleyrand intended to get back, if only for the glory of it. He does not fail to mention this in his *Memoirs* with some flattering exaggeration.

In theory, France was restored to her boundaries of 1791. Twenty-two years of wars and victories were wiped out with one stroke of the pen. After some brief debate, however, the representatives of the coalition decided to allow France to keep some of the territories conquered in 1792, such as a few Belgian communes on the northern frontier, the canton of Sarrebrück, the fortress of Landau, the former county of Montbéliard, part of Savoy, including Chambéry, and the county of Venaissin, which once belonged to the Holy See and which the allies handed over as if it were a precious gift. In all, there were 636,000 more persons than in 1791: 191,000 in Savoy and 205,000 of them in Venaissin. In theory, England gave back all the colonies she had seized during the long war, or at least she promised to do so. As a matter of fact, she kept Tabago and St. Lucia in America and the Île de France, which, along with Santo Domingo, were the finest flowers of the French colonial empire before 1791.

"I have finished my peace with the great powers," Talleyrand wrote to the Duchess de Courlande on the evening of this gloomy day. "It is a very good one, founded on a basis of perfect equality, and rather noble. My friends, and you especially (remember that she was half Russian, half German), ought to be pleased with me." He wrote again

on June 2, "I am content with the peace; it is made between equals. Everyone approves of it. . . ."

Later (his pleadings must be heard faithfully until the end) he explained himself: "When I think of the date of these treaties of 1814, of the difficulties of every kind which I faced, of the spirit of revenge which I found in some of the negotiators . . . , and which I had to fight, I confidently await the judgment which posterity will make. I shall limit myself to recalling that six months after the king's arrival in Paris, France was sure of her territory; foreign soldiers had left French soil. By the return of the garrisons from the strongholds and of prisoners, she had a superb army, and finally, we kept all the wonderful *objets d'art* conquered by our arms in almost all the museums of Europe."

"The treaty of May 30," wrote Talleyrand, "caused France to lose only what she had conquered, and not even all that she had conquered during the struggle that had just been terminated. It deprived her of nothing that was essential to her security." This is where Talleyrand goes to extremes and unwisely draws attention to the chief fault of the treaty. French statesmen have always planned to push back the northern frontier, which is too close to Paris, the heart of the country. Under Louis XIV, Flanders had been conquered, the Ardennes had been acquired, the union with Lorraine had been prepared and that with Alsace had been completed, only to protect Paris, but despite these precautions, Brussels and Trèves were still too close to the capitol, so that any invasion from the Netherlands or the Lower Moselle would be of great danger. This situation had been remedied during the Revolution by pushing the frontier back to the Rhine—and this was given up.

By not even taking a few important Rhenish or Belgian places from the allies and by thus reducing France to the perilous situation of 1791, the Treaty of Paris recreated the danger which France knew four times in a century and a half—in 1815, 1870, 1914, and 1940. What is more, since this frontier was reopened, she had to bear much heavier burdens. As far as the treaty of May 30 is concerned, only the territorial clauses are ever spoken of; there are others which made the sudden shrinking of French boundaries of much greater significance.

Talleyrand thought it a good idea to allow the marginal insertion of the premature indication of some already projected modifications in the map of Europe. Thus even before the debates in the Congress took place, he sanctioned giving Belgium to Holland, the establishment of German power on the left bank of the Rhine, the re-establishment of Austria in northern Italy, and the return of the formed republic of Genoa to

the kingdom of Sardinia—all articles whose consequence was to shut France up even more than in 1791, since on three frontiers, the northeast, east, and southeast, France faced two states that were two, three, or four times more powerful than before. Doubtless, the Prince had not signed this postscript to the treaty; it had simply been communicated to him, but by not protesting against these decisions, he confirmed them, and thus aggravated the clauses he had signed. At any rate, by passing over these secret articles, he created a situation that was very difficult for the plenipotentiaries France sent to Vienna. "A terrible barrier in the way of their undertakings," wrote Metternich.

One may maintain the fact, though one cannot boast of it, that there was nothing to do but to be resigned to making such immoderately large concessions and to reducing the "benefits" in order to win the "confidence" of the allies, as Talleyrand said. Yet Talleyrand boasted of it to an uncertain France and an astonished Europe. "Here is the true peace," he wrote to Metternich, "all the rest is only the appearance of it. . . . At last your excellent Emperor can hope for some tranquillity. Adieu. We are beginning our ministry in a most brilliant fashion. I rejoice with you over the peace which Europe is at last to enjoy."

Indeed, Europe was satisfied but surprised. She must have expected that France would cause greater difficulty, when, after having conquered half of Europe, she was reduced to her former frontiers which had always been considered incomplete and defective. Europe was so surprised that certain "Europeans" did not conceal their astonishment. "This peace," wrote the Count de Gentz, who was not at all favorably disposed towards the French, "this peace, with these conditions, will not help to make the King popular in France." The Tsar, who by his declaration of March 31 had sincerely intended to open the way for France to vindicate herself, was almost wounded by the fact that Talleyrand seemed to disdain, or at any rate to neglect, his generous intentions. Without doubt, Alexander's trusting good will towards the Prince had changed into the most distrusting ill will. Filled with his desire to win over Louis XVIII, Talleyrand did not spare the Constitution which had been voted by the Senate and for which the King substituted the famous "charter." The Tsar, who thought himself under obligation because of the encouragement which he had given to the senators at the beginning of April, declared that he was offended by the heedless way in which Talleyrand had abandoned them. "By his conduct," he wrote on June 1, "this man sacrifices his country and his friends to his ambition." It is probable that the Russian sovereign, who was more French than some Frenchmen, did not limit his disapproval to the Prince's interior

policy, but extended his severity to include his acceptance of the regulation of the frontiers.

The country found this peace neither "good" nor "noble," though Talleyrand declared that it was so. It was still proud of the glory and of the conquests of the "Great Nation." Since practically everything was given up, there had been no point to imprisoning the Emperor, who had been called "the only obstacle to an advantageous peace." Perhaps it could not have been managed otherwise, but people at least wanted to feel that the royal government shared the nation's sadness about this occurrence. But the princes and their friends openly shared the satisfaction which Talleyrand expressed. People said that the lands which had been conquered were being used to pay for the services which the rest of Europe had rendered to the restored dynasty.

At the Congress of Vienna, Talleyrand was again to represent France. What would be his position? A very superior position, it was said, for since he no longer had anything to ask for, he would have a free hand, but since he no longer had anything to ask for, he no longer had anything to give. Everyone came to Vienna with some pawns; since France no longer had any, she was disarmed. He later declared that it put him above quarrels, and thus gave him the opportunity to act as arbitrator. I think it more just to say, with one of the biographers who has studied him the most, that if Talleyrand played a great role at Vienna, he "was always on the margin of the Congress since he spoke in the name of a power whose international situation was already fixed." Talleyrand would certainly have objected to this judgment.

"This was my power," he exclaimed. "The Treaty of Paris, which regulated our situation, freed me from looking for bargains." But if her fate had not been already decided, France might have profited by these bargains. By disposing of French interests in the Treaty of Paris, Talleyrand might have turned the Congress of Vienna into a game played without trumps, a diplomatic *tour de force*. But having consented in advance to such great sacrifices in the name of France, his was the lazy man's way out, a fact which gives a rather good sketch of the Prince's nonchalant and often indifferent character.

30

THE PRELIMINARIES OF THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

Instructions and aims

"I CONSIDERED the position of French plenipotentiary at Vienna very difficult; I never knew a more honorable one. The role of this plenipotentiary was to complete the work of the Restoration by assuring the solidity of the edifice whose reconstruction had been permitted by Providence. I thought I had the right and I regarded it as a duty to claim this post."

One must always admire the way in which the old Prince de Talleyrand could give a noble cast to everything he did and in which he could envelop the tissue of intrigues of which his life consisted in a simple, dignified, almost majestic style. There was no need for him to speak of "right" and "duty" to explain his desire to have the King make him the representative of France at Vienna, and we have every reason to believe that in 1814 he did not take his role as the agent of "Providence" so seriously. The Prince wanted to go to Vienna for various reasons. First of all, he naturally had a passionate interest in this international settlement, where he could spin his own intrigue across the enormous intrigues which were being plotted. He was tempted by this great game, in which he could to some degree resume his role as an important statesman, which his subordinate position under the Emperor had not allowed him to play. He thought that in this melee of chancelleries which was succeeding to the enormous battle of nations he could realize some of the ideas which he had had throughout his career, as, for example, creating for France certain alliances of which he had always dreamed against certain adversaries whom he had never liked. Finally, he saw his mission to Vienna not only as the proof of the confidence of his King, but also as an opportunity to serve the personal desires and designs of Louis XVIII and thus to win future assurance of his favor which was still restrained. Others said that as usual the Prince saw the

Congress simply as an enormous market place where he might realize some personal gains.

The King had asked him to prepare for himself an exposition of the policy to be followed under the form of "instructions" to "the representatives" whom France sent to Vienna. Talleyrand wrote on September 9, "I worked at my best, for I have to arrive with the instructions which I am making." The sovereign put him in complete charge of formulating the directives, though they seemed to have been dictated to him. In reality, Louis XVIII had his own ideas about the "demands" which he thought France ought to make of the Congress and he intended to have these ideas prevail. Talleyrand's art consisted of presenting his own most precious ideas through conversations with the King, of making them seem as if they were the only ones which France could maintain, of making them seem magnificent, inspired by high principles and following a very logical system. The Memorandum of forty octavo pages which Talleyrand presented to the King is such a well-arranged document that our archives possess nothing else like it. Everything is organized, clear, concise, sharp—a plan of battle. Naturally, "the interest of France" is put first. This interest demands the following (this is Talleyrand's résumé of his memorandum):

1) that Austria be allowed no opportunity to make the states of the King of Sardinia fall into the hands of the princes of her House, that is, into her own;

2) that Naples, which Joachim Murat still held, be restored to Ferdinand IV (de Bourbon);

3) that the whole of Poland did not and could not come under the sovereignty of Russia;

4) that Prussia did not acquire either the kingdom of Saxony—at least not all of it—nor Mainz.

I said a short time ago that these "demands of France" were almost all so plainly inspired by the personal sympathies and antipathies of the King that there can be no doubt that the author of the *Instructions* made every effort to please his sovereign.

Armed with these *Instructions,* of which the King greatly approved and which he had signed, Talleyrand left for Vienna on September 18, accompanied by Dalberg, La Tour du Pin, Alexis de Noailles, one of the important directors of his ministry, La Besnardière, and by his niece, the Countess Edmond de Périgord (the future Duchess de Dino), who was destined to be hostess at the embassy and to "make it pleasant." He left his office in charge of Jaucourt, who kept the valuable Blanc d'Hauterive with him.

The plans of the powers

The representatives of the famous "four powers," who intended to control the Congress, had not yet agreed among themselves, and, for that reason alone, kept putting off the opening of these international assizes until the end of June. They all had their desires and their jealousies, not to mention their old quarrels. Now if they were divided when the Congress opened, they had much to fear from the action of France. France, of course, had been put *hors de combat* by the Treaty of Paris, but Talleyrand was under a great illusion when he thought by this fact he had entirely allayed suspicion and had completely won confidence. On the contrary, there was a great fear that this dangerous France, by making use of "the rights of the peoples," might upset the wicked feast to which the kings and chancellors were preparing to sit down. There could be no flaw in the accord of the "great powers."

I am making no pretense of writing the history of the Congress here, but to understand the role which Talleyrand played, one must summarize the situation which he faced.

The three sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and Austria seemed to have agreed, through the treaties which they had concluded with each other in the autumn of 1813, about the partition of Europe, but since then they seemed to have fallen out.

The Tsar was now absolutely determined to realize the dream which he had cherished for ten years: the complete reconstitution of Poland under his rule by keeping the former Prussian share which his troops were occupying and by obtaining the part which Austria had received. Thus he would push the Prussians back upon Germany and the Austrians back upon Italy.

Prussia, while eager to keep her share of Poland, if possible, wanted all of Saxony, if she had to yield to the Tsar, and intended to make him pay well for her complaisance. With this hope, she had allied herself with Russia.

Austria intended to regain control of Italy, but without giving up the least part of her share of Poland to the Tsar, and, what is more, without allowing Prussia to give up the least part of hers. Austria thought that if Russia were to extend to the Oder she would become so powerful that she would overshadow all Europe, and would not delay in working the traditional designs of the Romanovs on the Balkan peninsula.

England had the same fears. She had seemed especially concerned with restraining France forever. She thought it would be enough to set up a Kingdom of the Netherlands, formed by the union of Belgium to Hol-

land, and to establish a strong German power on the Rhine. Once this was decided, the British cabinet began to think of Constantinople again. It did not want Austria to let the Tsar reach that city, and by refusing him any part of Poland, also intended to bar the way to Russian hegemony. But while Austria feared the re-establishment in Saxony of Prussia, which was thus becoming all-powerful in Germany, England had nothing against this great addition to Prussia, since it would also be set against France.

The conflict was deadly; it was in an effort to settle it before the opening of the Congress that the "four powers" put off the date of the meeting. Russia and Prussia had reached an agreement in secret. Prussia gave up her part of Poland (from Warsaw to Poznan) to the Tsar, provided that he would have all of Saxony given over to her, without prejudice to the other territories she wanted. Austria and England, who could have opposed this, agreed only about refusing Poland to the Tsar, but since they could not agree on the fate of Saxony, they were prevented from making a complete alliance. At this point, the opening of the Congress was put off for three months.

The wishes of Louis XVIII

What was the policy of France at Vienna under such circumstances? It is traditional, as I have said, to pay great honor to Talleyrand for the course which he followed. "A political masterpiece," said Albert Sorel, in summarizing his study. I cannot subscribe to the general enthusiasm. One of the cleverest parts of the game he played is that, by a mixture of dignity and cleverness, firmness and tact, he was able to prevail upon the powers, then to insinuate himself between them to break up their union against France. But one has the right to look farther and to ignore the game itself to see what profits it brought. There were no gains for France, and it seems that finally the game turned out to be contrary to the interests of the nation. After the Treaty of Paris, France clearly could hope for no acquisitions at Vienna. Nevertheless, there might have been a moment when she could have found an unhoped-for advantage, but Talleyrand let this last opportunity fall.

Feeling that Louis XVIII had a personal antipathy towards him, and wishing to win his good graces, he thought less of serving France than of serving the King at Vienna, and it was a misfortune that at the time these two interests were different and often in opposition.

The King had put up with the Treaty of Paris, which restored to him almost the same France which he had left in 1791. He had even been almost vexed that Savoy was added to it, since he thought that Savoy

legitimately belonged to his brother-in-law, the King of Sardinia. This principle of legitimacy seems to have been the basis of all the King's opinions. It is remarkable, however, that this principle did not seem at all essential to him except when it served his personal sympathies and antipathies. He intended to compensate the King of Sardinia by having the former state of Genoa given to him, which was after all as legitimate as the state of Sardinia. But by joining this magnificent piece of Italy to the Piedmont, the King of Sardinia could defend himself more powerfully against the eventual enterprises of Austria, who was going to be given dangerous hegemony in the peninsula, since she was to receive Lombardy and Venice.

Louis XVIII, moreover, was determined to save the King of Saxony, another relation. Of course, this king was an ally of Bonaparte's and had seemed to remain faithful to him until the end, as a consequence of which he had been made a prisoner in his capital by the allies, shut up in his palace, and provisorily deprived of his kingdom, which was occupied by Russian troops. But Louis, a first cousin through his mother, a Saxon princess, had always kept his friendship for him. Since he thought that he had only "submitted to" the usurper, he held no grudge against him, and he also felt that to allow the representative of an ancient dynasty, closely united by blood to the House of France, to be dethroned would be to make himself an accomplice in an assault on the famous principle of legitimacy. It would be a service to this principle to reestablish the Bourbons of Sicily in Naples and the Bourbons of Parma in their principality. The problem was to chase Joachim Murat, usurper of a Bourbon crown and Napoleon's brother-in-law, from Naples and to make Marie-Louise, Napoleon's wife, and her son withdraw from Parma, which, at the expense of other Bourbons, had been promised to her by the Treaty of Fontainbleau, signed by the allied sovereigns on April 11, 1814.

This constituted the "family program," colored by concern for legitimacy, which the King one day had to defend from reproach. But there was not one point in this program that was really to France's advantage. She had no interest in strengthening the kingdom of Sardinia to the southeast. By protecting Saxony against Prussia, she ran the risk of making Prussia look with longing upon the left bank of the Rhine. One cannot see, moreover, that France had to suffer to see one of her most magnificent soldiers maintained on his Neapolitan throne, and the ducal crown of Parma promised to the son of her former Emperor, born a French prince.

Talleyrand's preferences

If the King had his sympathies and antipathies, Talleyrand also had his. I have frequently said what they were: sympathy for Austria and England, antipathy for Prussia and Russia. He had, as we know, perseveringly followed the idea that France had to seek an alliance with Austria as a means of restraining the ambitions of Prussia in Germany and of Russia in the Balkans. As much as and even more than Metternich and Castlereagh, the Austrian and English representatives at the Congress, Talleyrand feared and disliked the Russian hegemony which was being established. If he had seemed to pay court to the Tsar at Erfurt, if he had maintained cordial relations with him from 1808 to 1814, if he had welcomed him at Paris and overwhelmed him with deferential attention, it was only to make use of him, first to restrain Napoleon's ambition, and then to overthrow him. But immediately afterwards, intending to make use of Louis XVIII's profound antipathy for Alexander, he had eliminated him from French affairs, had disdained his advice, had, in short, acted in such a way that the Tsar, thinking he had been made a fool of, held Talleyrand in horror, and his King as well.

Preventing Alexander from realizing the reconstitution of Poland was one of the chief articles of the *Instructions* which Talleyrand had given himself. He put especial bitterness into his efforts to have Prussia refused Saxony, which Louis XVIII intended to keep for his cousin and which the Tsar was most eager to have given to the Hohenzollerns. Thus Talleyrand vowed to fight against Russia and Prussia, but to look to Austria and England for support. To be supported by them was the realization of the idea which always dominated his political thought, but to be supported by them was to an extent to give up to them. Talleyrand himself had to yield to England's desire to establish Prussia, which had been refused Saxony, on the Rhine. By throwing Austria and England against Russia, the representative of France aroused the Tsar's wrath and thus lost the only friendship which remained to France.

France, the small states, and the nationalities

On the eve of the meeting of the Congress, awakened "nationalism" was cruelly threatened and the "small states" were gravely exposed to the devouring ambition of the "powers." The breath of the Revolution had created a new Europe, that of the masses, but the Europe of the

chancelleries had not changed. She was still a many-headed beast of prey, which, after having cut Poland to bits, had thrown herself upon France with the aim of dealing with her according to her own convenience. Now her only aspiration was to divide the spoils of Napoleonic Europe, with no regard for the aspirations of the masses nor for the rights of the small states.

Italy, where Napoleon had sown the seeds of the *"Risorgimento,"* and which he had set on the way towards liberty and independence, was again reduced, according to Metternich's coldly ferocious saying, to being nothing but a "geographical expression." The German peoples, hoping to unite themselves as a "great Germany," and whom the same Napoleon seemed to have sent towards the realization of their dream, had turned these same nationalistic passions against the "protector" who became considered an "oppressor," but because of Metternich's unrelenting actions, these passions were again put under the yoke which they had cast off. Poland, which Napoleon had brought back to life, was again threatened with being torn to bits and put back into the tomb from which the Emperor had made an effort to raise her. Since Finland was abandoned to the Russian yoke, Sweden was to receive Norway as compensation, a decision against which Norway revolted in advance. Belgium was up in arms about the prospect of being subjected to Holland, the Genoese about being annexed to Piedmont. The small states feared that they might be sacrificed, or at least neglected, and they were. Denmark, deprived of Norway, could obtain no compensation. "You have won all hearts," said the ever gracious Tsar to King Christian, a good, honest man, who answered sadly, "Hearts, perhaps, but not one soul!" In reality, four powers laid down the law. As early as September, they had marked out their prey.

The French policy of protecting the smaller states was called quixotic, and as practiced by Napoleon III from 1852 to 1870, and by the Republic from 1919 to 1939, brought France nothing but disappointments. It may be argued that this policy could bring only benefits to France, as well as moral prestige, by breaking the wall which the annexation of Belgium by Holland and of the Rhineland by Prussia was building to the north and to the east of the kingdom. For an instant, it seemed as if Talleyrand were going to assume the role of protector of the weak. As early as the summer of 1814, he knew through his agents and through letters from the little Italian and German courts that they were counting on him to put up a resistance to the devouring ambitions of the great courts. But his political sense and his knowledge of tradition were sufficient to inspire him with an idea which he must certainly have

thought of before his departure for Vienna, since, in the famous *Instructions* which he drew up for himself, he stated it clearly: "What is to the interest of the small states, is also to her interest (France). They all wish to preserve their existence, and she ought to see that they preserve it. Some of them think of aggrandizement, and it would suit her to have them aggrandize themselves since that can foil the enlargement of the great states." When he passed through Munich on his way to Vienna, he had a long talk with Mongelas, the chief minister of the King of Bavaria, and encouraged him in his intentions to put a stop to the Prussian projects for aggrandizement. He himself thought this action conformed with his instructions to "win over the confidence of the small powers to France."

The way to fulfill their wishes was to permit them to express them as soon as possible and, to this end, to prevent the four great powers from dictating all decisions to the Congress. In the summer of 1814, Talleyrand thought of getting support from Spain against the great and in favor of the small powers. The Austrian ambassador at Paris denounced the very favorable sentiments of the new Spanish ambassador towards France, who was none other than the Duke de San Carlos whose "marked predilection" for France was exploited by Talleyrand. He won permission from Madrid that its representative should join the French plenipotentiary in his efforts on behalf of the small powers.

Thus Talleyrand felt more able to protest against the pretension of the "Four" to control the fate of "nations" before the Congress met, and when, after the Prussian plenipotentiary affirmed "the right of conquests," he invoked "the public right," one could have been deceived. In Talleyrand's mind this was only an act by which he wanted to make himself feared in order to agree later with the great powers, and, as soon as he had agreed, he would collaborate without reserve or scruple in their work against the small powers and would countersign their decrees.

Talleyrand, reared, formed, and nourished by the spirit of the Europe of the old days, never, as we know, supported the doctrine of the Revolution, which he fought against even under the Directory, even while he pretended to serve it. He seems never to have had the idea that it was an evil thing for the masses to be put up on the block. When he arrived at Vienna, he had only one thought, which he would have served badly if he had alarmed the four great powers with such "subversive" ideas. This unique, absorbing thought, which excluded all others, and which could be defended and approved, was simply to have France return to the circle of the powers, to give her back her say in European

affairs as soon as possible, and, by so doing, to destroy the league that had been formed against her, to remake the alliances, to stop those who displeased her to the advantage of those who pleased her—in short, according to the spiteful exclamation of an adversary six months after the coming of Louis XVIII, to "play the minister of Louis XIV." He sacrificed many interests and many advantages to this thought, but he succeeded on the whole. He had the right to glorify himself in his own eyes because he had looked forward exclusively to the result which he finally obtained.

31

TALLEYRAND AT THE CONGRESS

The first meeting

HE ARRIVED at Vienna on September 23, and went to the Kaunitz mansion, where he immediately established himself. Hardly a week went by before everyone knew that none could surpass Talleyrand in the luxury of his receptions and the excellence of his hospitality. The young Countess Edmond de Périgord quickly became the guiding spirit of these almost daily festivities. She was more striking than beautiful, but witty, intelligent, full of tact as well as daring, the real lieutenant whom this great captain of diplomacy needed. She was, moreover, a Biren de Courlande, both Russian and German by birth, but within four years had become a Parisian lady who knew all the tricks of the salons—in short, the European lady, prepared to receive Europe.

Talleyrand collected information. The Four—Austria, Russia, Prussia, and England—had been deliberating for weeks in very difficult preparatory councils. Because they were difficult, the men who were in conflict would gladly have excluded the representative of the "conquered nation." He was feared. Count de Gentz had written as early as June 24, "Although she seems not to be admitted simply because of etiquette, France can, by acting with discretion and prudence, act as a sort of mediator, and can thus restore her political influence, which was absolutely destroyed by her latest misfortunes." But France was represented by this terrible Talleyrand, who was considered a dangerous agent of dissolution. While putting the "powers" on guard, Pozzo di Borgo painted a most disturbing portrait of Talleyrand to Nesselrode, saying that "even his civilities are usurious investments which must be paid for before the day's end." "But you know the beast better than I," he added. Nesselrode and the others knew him, indeed; they planned to keep him out of things.

Talleyrand expected this. When he left Paris, he had feigned discouragement to Pasquier. "I shall probably play a wretched role," he said. "First of all, how will they treat me? Will they want to listen to

me? . . . I do not have the trust of those people; they have not taken many pains to hide it from me for the past five months. In such a situation, it would be better to stay home, if I could." As a matter of fact, the day before Talleyrand's arrival, at a meeting at Metternich's, it had been decided that "conference with the French plenipotentiaries would not be entered until such a matter (agreement among the Four) had been decided upon."

But how could such a power as France, despite her loss of importance, be eliminated from the preparations of the Congress? It seemed impossible, after reflection. They had to resign themselves and to decide that Talleyrand would be admitted to the preparatory meetings, as would Spain, and that henceforth, the meetings of the Four would be those of the Six. This had been decided upon in the conference of the Four, but it was also resolved that in the conferences to follow, the dangerous Prince would be kept in the dark.

The Six met for the first time on the thirtieth, a week after Talleyrand's arrival. In order not to seem too humble at this conference, Talleyrand from the first was deliberately haughty and curt. The great game began. Since there was a reference at the beginning to the "allied powers," he pretended to be greatly surprised. "Allied, allied, against whom?" he said. "It's no longer against Napoleon; he is on the isle of Elba. It's no longer against France; the peace is made. It's surely not against the King of France; he guarantees the duration of the peace. Gentlemen, let us speak frankly. If there are still allied powers, I am in the way here. . . . And yet, if I were not here, you would miss me. I am perhaps the only one who is asking for nothing. Respect, that is all I want for France. I want nothing, I repeat, and I bring you a great deal. The presence of a minister of Louis XVIII consecrates the principle on which all social order is based. Europe's chief need is to banish forever the notion that rights may be acquired by conquest alone and to revive the sacred principle of legitimacy from which stem order and stability . . . If, as it is already rumored, a few privileged powers wish to exert dictatorial power over the Congress, I must say, limiting myself to the terms of the Treaty of Paris, that I cannot consent to recognize any supreme power in this meeting, and I shall not concern myself with any proposal made on its behalf."

There was profound silence as he spoke. Everyone was astonished by his pretentious language. He, however, had stated his famous "principle of legitimacy," opposed it to the "right of conquest," which alone had been discussed for weeks, and had challenged the influence which the

restricted conference would have on the future Congress. He spoke again to express his astonishment that such a small group intended to regulate the business of the Congress. "We cannot, however," Hardenburg, the Prussian minister, answered sharply, "have the affairs of Europe decided by the princes of Leyen and of Lichtenstein." Then Talleyrand dealt a smashing blow, "We cannot have them decided by the representatives of Prussia and Russia, either." Thus he created two camps, and indicated in which one he was to be found. They were all so dumbfounded that when Talleyrand declared that he considered all the previous meetings of the Four null and void, it was agreed that the protocols of the preceding meetings would be destroyed so that that of September would officially be the first. As he was leaving, the Count de Gentz, secretary of the conference, said that the plenipotentiaries had been "thoroughly scolded for two hours" by Talleyrand. Once again, with a single blow, he had won the place which suited him, and had made himself at home there.

He intended to press his advantage, and the next morning he addressed a note to the Congress in which he said that "the eight powers which signed the Treaty of Paris (Portugal and Sweden being added to the Six) were alone qualified to act as a committee in charge of drawing up the questions."

Talleyrand persisted in his severity in the days that followed. When the Six met again on October 3, he was asked to withdraw his note of October 1; he refused in such a curt fashion that even Metternich was offended; he let an overly sincere remark escape him, "We would have done better to handle our affairs among ourselves." Talleyrand arose at once; he would no longer appear, he declared, at any conference and would await the opening of the Congress, and he left—still the great game. But he wrote a letter to Louis XVIII in which can be seen his great hope. "Our position here is difficult," he said, "it can become more so. The Emperor Alexander is giving full scope to his ambition. Prussia is hoping for a great increase. Pusillanimous Austria has only a shameful ambition, but she is willing to be helped, and these are not the only difficulties. There are still others which come from the engagements made by the Courts when they did not hope to defeat him whom they have seen overthrown and when they promised to make a peace with him that would allow them to imitate him. Today, when Your Majesty has been restored to the throne and has elevated justice with him, the powers to which these engagements were advantageous do not wish to give them up, and those who perhaps regret being engaged

do not know how to free themselves . . . The ministers of Your Majesty could already give up all other hopes but that of saving our honor, but we are not at that point."

Talleyrand was becoming necessary. There was now greater uneasiness about seeing him outside of the conferences than within. Metternich wanted to have a private talk with him. "I was at his house at seven o'clock," wrote Talleyrand. "He first spoke to me of a projected declaration which he had had drawn up, and which differed, he told me, a bit from mine (his note of October 1), but which had much in common with it, and with which he hoped I would be pleased. I asked him for it; he did not have it.

" 'Probably,' I said to him, 'it has been communicated to the "Allies." ' 'Do not speak of the allies any more,' he said, 'there are no more. There are people here who ought to be in the sense that, without joining together, they ought to think in the same fashion and to want the same things.' 'How can you have the courage to put Russia like a belt about your two most important possessions, Hungary and Bohemia? How can you allow the patrimony of a tried and true neighbor, into whose family an archduchess has married (Saxony) to be given to your natural enemy? It is strange that it is we who want to oppose it, and that it is you who do not want to.' He said to me that I did not have confidence in him, and I answered that he had not given me much cause to have any, and I reminded him of some circumstances in which he had not kept his word with me. 'And then,' I added, 'how can I have confidence in a man who, even to those who are most inclined to make his business theirs, is all mystery? As for me, I make no mystery, and have no need of any. This is the advantage of those who negotiate only with principles. Here are paper and pens,' I continued. 'Do you want to write that France asks for nothing and even would accept nothing? I am ready to sign.' 'But you have the matter of Naples,' he said, 'which is properly yours.' 'No more mine than everybody's. This is only a matter of principle for me. I ask that he who has the right to be at Naples be at Naples, and nothing more. Now this is what everyone ought to want as I do. Let principles be followed, I shall be found compliant towards all. I am going to tell you frankly to what I can consent and to what I shall never consent. I think that the King of Saxony, in the present situation, can be obliged to make sacrifices; I suppose that he will be inclined to make them because he is wise. But there is a wish to despoil him of all his estates and to give the realm of Saxony to Prussia; I shall never consent to it. I shall never consent that Luxemburg and Mainz be given to Prussia, either. Nor shall I

consent to Russia's passing the Vistula, having forty-four million subjects in Europe, and her frontiers at the Oder. But if Luxemburg is given to Holland and Mainz to Bavaria, if the king and the kingdom of Saxony are preserved, and if Russia does not pass the Vistula, I shall have no objection to make to this plan of Europe.' M. de Metternich took my hands as he said, 'We are much less far apart than you think. I promise you that Prussia will have neither Luxemburg or Mainz. We do not want Russia to be excessively enlarged any more than you do, and as for Saxony, we shall do what we can to preserve at least a part of it.' "

"It was only to know his feelings relative to these various matters," added the Prince, "that I had spoken to him as I had."

"Returning to the conversation about the Congress, he stressed the necessity of not making public at the moment the rule for admission which I had proposed because, he said, it alarmed everyone, and as for myself, it inconveniences me at present, because Murat, seeing that his plenipotentiary is excluded, will think that his problem is settled . . ."

. . . . .

Encouraged by Metternich's explanation, Talleyrand seemed more headstrong than ever to the others. The "principles" on which the Congress would base its debates had to be established and had to be proclaimed by declaration. This could be nothing but the "public right," the Prince resolved. The King of Saxony had to be saved. The Prussians realized this and were angry. "M. de Hardenburg, standing up, his fists on the table, almost threatening," wrote Talleyrand, "uttered broken words. 'No, Monsieur, the public right? It is useless. Why say that we shall act according to the public right? That is taken for granted.' I answered that if that were taken for granted, it would be all the better to say so." Humboldt exclaimed in his turn, "What is the public right doing here?" Talleyrand's quick reply has been traditionally admired: "It brings you here." That did not mean much if this "public right" did not give oppressed nations the right to seek liberty, but this elliptical reply literally struck Humboldt and left him dumbfounded.

Lord Castlereagh drew the Prince aside on the pretext of influencing him to be less inflexible. Actually, he intended to sound him out as Metternich had done. What demands was France holding in reserve to make the "public right" so dear to her? What did France want? "Nothing," Talleyrand answered again. The noble lord, pleasantly reassured, upheld the request of Talleyrand, who, perhaps wrongly, was engaged to ask nothing for his country. It was agreed that the prefatory

declaration should mention the famous "public right." The Tsar, who was vexed, exclaimed the next day that Talleyrand "was playing the minister of Louis XIV here." Talleyrand and Louis XVIII had plainly had a great success.

The Prince congratulated himself. At the end of October he wrote that the "House of Bourbon," which had been back in France for five months, and France, which had been conquered five months before, were already restored to their rank in Europe and had won back the influence which belonged to them in the most important deliberations of the Council.

Against Russia and Prussia

During October, the Prince grew more determined to set obstacles in the way of all Russian and Prussian projects. His conversations with Castlereagh and Metternich had made him hope that they might support him, and, while they continued to pretend to their allies that they distrusted this "dangerous" Frenchman, they themselves began to find him more valuable than dangerous. His strength lay in his consistency. He declared to all comers that he hated the "right of conquest," which alone, he said, was the basis of Napoleon's enterprises, and was just as completely hateful when Russians and Prussians made use of it. "Bonaparte's successes," he wrote to Germaine de Staël, "were not the only thing to be detested in him . . . It was his principles that were horrible; they must be shut out of Europe forever . . . I do not know what we shall do here, but I promise you a noble diction." To his "great friend," the Duchess de Courlande, he wrote, "Your Prussians passionately love Bonaparte's doctrine of usurpation; they detest nothing but his successes. They are awful people, and M. de Humboldt more than any other. They wish to destroy Saxony completely, as if they had the right to do so, as if conquest alone conferred sovereignty. I arise against all these principles." Talleyrand knew that Alexander had exclaimed at the Countess Bagration's, "Poland is ours! . . . I shall never give it up, I am occupying it with 200,000 men. It will be seen who will chase me out." Talleyrand acted as if he were scandalized by this statement made by the formerly "generous" Tsar. "I fear that the noble part of his history is over," he wrote. "He is quite different here from what he was at Paris. His philanthropy has become very warlike."

Talleyrand was not alone in his uneasiness about the Tsar's statement. Castlereagh, who was more and more determined to bar Russia's way to the Occident, was alarmed and angered. He thought of alienating Prussia from the Tsar. Let Prussia refuse to yield her part of Poland

to the Tsar, and England would have Saxony given to her. But exactly this thought rubbed Metternich the wrong way. The other Germans were perhaps even more alarmed by it, since they did not intend to let Prussia eat up Germany. The representatives of Bavaria, whom Metternich had not allowed to remain ignorant of Talleyrand's ideas, made an appeal to him. He coldly sent them to Metternich who, since Austria was so deeply interested in having Prussia far away from Dresden, ought to have the courage to oppose the plans of the Prussians. Why should Talleyrand bell the cat? But Talleyrand thought of helping out. At any rate, he wrote to Louis XVIII, asking him to rebuild the French army in order to give more weight to his action.

Under these circumstances, the Congress finally opened its official session on November 1.

The Congress opens

The Congress was divided into committees to deal with the affairs of Austria, Germany, and Switzerland.

Italian problems especially concerned Genoa, Parma, and Naples, about which Talleyrand had requests to make. He supported the demand of the King of Sardinia that Liguria be given to him in compensation for his loss of Savoy. This demand was agreed to. The Genoese deputies, protesting against the execution of their little country, were not even allowed to make themselves heard; this is how problems were handled at Vienna. Parma was promised to Marie-Louise by the treaty of Fontainbleau, and after her, to her son, the little Napoleon, but France, in the person of Louis XVIII, wished to take it away from the former inhabitants of the Tuileries, the survivors of the usurpation. Metternich, however, thought that he was obliged to defend the cause of the former archduchess, but he was not entirely free from certain mental reservations. Perhaps a compromise could be reached. Austria was equally under obligation to maintain Murat, whose presence "scandalized" Talleyrand, on his throne at Naples, because of the promises which had determined him to betray Napoleon. Though he was formerly so intimately tied to the Queen of Naples, Caroline Bonaparte, Talleyrand demanded the downfall of this "usurper" and the restoration of Naples to the Bourbons, who had been "unworthily despoiled." "Murat must be chased out first of all," he wrote, "for their must be no illegitimacy in any corner of Europe." This was the *Delenda est Carthago,* wrote Louis XVIII, and he talked so much of it that the Tsar, hoping to win him over, thought of offering to support him on this point, which would perhaps make him break with Metternich.

While Italy was being dealt with, Talleyrand demanded that the isle of Elba be taken from Napoleon and that he be transported to one of the Azores, and even farther, if possible. Decidedly, the Emperor would pay till the last for the scene of January, 1809! But the Tsar declared that he was not vexed to oppose the wish of Louis XVIII and also to play a trick on Metternich.

Alexander was more and more angered by the increasing opposition to his projects. He wanted to intimidate his adversaries. Prince Repnine, who was occupying Saxony with the Russian troops, asked Frederick-William, by the order of the Tsar, to establish a Prussian administration there. When that was done, Repnine went back to Poland with his troops, but without waiting longer, the Grand Duke Constantine, who was established at Warsaw, announced to the Poles that they would all be under the rule of the Romanovs. Alexander, nevertheless, was uneasy about the effect of this double *coup d'état,* and made a last attempt to win back Talleyrand. It is remarkable that all now had recourse to the French, the Bavarians to prevent the establishment of Prussia in Saxony, the Tsar to authorize it.

Having summoned the Prince, Alexander said to him, "Let's make a bargain. You be friendly towards me in the Saxony question, and I shall be friendly towards you in the Naples question." Talleyrand answered coldly that Saxony had to remain in the possession of the legitimate king, and when the Tsar answered that Prussia would refuse to give up the prey she desired, Talleyrand, with his customary poker-face, pretended to look for a way to convince Prussia. He found only one: that the Tsar should give back to Frederick-William the Polish territories which he was occupying. Though he was vexed, Alexander did not give up his effort to win Talleyrand over. The next day he sent Adam Czartoriski to him. If he wanted to soften Talleyrand, the Tsar would probably have to have paid with something far different from the head of the unfortunate Murat. This was the moment when, by agreeing with the Tsar, France could still with his help have managed substantial rectifications as far as the Rhine and Belgium were concerned. But historians object that Talleyrand had no precise offer to reject. The Tsar was simply feeling his way. It was impossible to propose a revision of the treaty of Paris to this dangerous Talleyrand, since it would put him in conflict with his former allies, unless he were encouraged to make an offer. The Prince looked upon Czartoriski's visit as an opportunity to affirm his unyielding resistance. "You speak to me of a bargain, and I do not want to make one. I have the happiness not to be so much at my ease as you. Your wishes and your interests decide you, and

I am obliged to follow principles, and principles do not compromise." It is rather astonishing to see such rigid adherence to the religion of principles in a man who for forty years did not seem to be so completely at its mercy.

Rebuffed, Alexander despaired of his cause and tried to address himself to Metternich. But Metternich was angry and at the house of a certain European lady, he was enraged by Metternich's "face of plaster." Since the "face of plaster" turned to ice at the beginning of the conversation, the Tsar lost all control and exclaimed that Metternich "was betraying his sovereign himself by revolting against the wishes of Russia." Metternich arose, pale with fury, and went at once to offer his resignation to the Emperor Francis, who refused it and said that he was determined to retain him. That evening in all the salons of Vienna there was talk of "a war between Russia and Austria." Since all the chancelleries had their police, and Talleyrand especially, he was quickly informed of the results of the conversation. Everyone was working for him now.

Lord Castlereagh, however, was following out his own plan to alienate Prussia from Russia by promising Saxony to the former if she would refuse to give the Tsar Warsaw and Poznan, something which suited the men from Berlin very well. Alexander got wind of what was going on. He had a violent scene with poor Frederick-William, who protested his fidelity "with tears." Castlereagh was baffled when he heard of this. The British cabinet sent its representative other instructions. Since Metternich, encouraged by Talleyrand, declared that he was determined not even to consider the "scandalous" cession of Saxony to Prussia, and since Prussia persisted in her claims, there was bound to be a quarrel with Austria, when Russia had such control over the King of Prussia. To please Metternich, Castlereagh also opposed this cession. To soothe Prussia, she was offered the whole of the left bank of the Rhine, in exchange for Saxony, on the condition that she would refuse to give the Tsar her part of Poland.

The problem of the Rhineland

The problem of the Rhineland had already been set before the Committee on German Affairs. But since the opening of the conferences, it had influenced the policy of England, and Lord Castlereagh was obsessed with it. It seemed unlikely to him, as it did to all of Europe, that France, without even a debate, could give up the whole left bank of the Rhine, according to the Treaty of Paris, since it was a rich country, thickly populated, formerly attached to the French community, the only

barrier which was capable of protecting Paris from afar. He was certain that during the discussions at Vienna Talleyrand would look for a way to recover all or part of this precious territory. When the French plenipotentiary made attempts to win him over, he would say, "Ah, if you still had no designs on the left bank of the Rhine!" Talleyrand would answer that "France could not be supposed to have that ambition without being supposed to be mad." But the noble lord would shake his head in a doubtful manner that was almost insulting. He would gladly have made Prussia a gift of this royal morsel, including Saxony as well. Prussia had to emerge from the congress as strong as possible. "There is no principle to which I attach more importance than the substantial reconstruction of Prussia," said Castlereagh, and it was precisely for the sake of opposing them to France that he wanted to establish the Prussians on the left bank of the Rhine.

But, curiously enough, Prussia at first rejected this princely gift. The refusal was clearly stated in a note from Hardenburg to Metternich on October 15: "Prussia desires, if possible, to have no frontier in common with France, because she will always be comparatively weak on the Rhine." Prussia suspected that Austria wished to push her towards the Rhine in order not to have to give her Saxony, which, when united to the territories on the Elbe, would make a compact state for the Hohenzollerns. The Rhine, on the contrary, would spread them out too much. "She (Prussia) must have, at one point at least, a concentrated mass of territories, which will be able to lend prompt assistance to the distant areas." She wanted nothing of the Rhineland but Mainz, the only city that was refused to her, or almost so. The Prussians were so unwilling to accept the left bank that autumn that, in order to facilitate their getting possession of all of Saxony, they would gladly have established the King of Saxony there. But London was against it. Lord Liverpool, head of the Foreign Office, did not want this "tool of France" either in Mainz or Cologne.

Talleyrand, strangely enough, also was not inclined to favor the establishment of this "tool of France" on the Rhine, even though he was a friendly prince who would have been an agreeable neighbor because he was weak. The Prince tried to justify himself later when he was reproached on this account. If France should someday again want to establish herself on the Rhine, he said, she would be hindered precisely because of her friendship for Frederick—a poor excuse which does not hide the serious error he made by urging Prussia towards the Rhineland and by establishing her there almost in spite of herself.

Acting on instructions from London, Castlereagh made a straight-

forward proposal to give all of the Rhineland to Prussia. The noble lord also took it upon himself to offer this magnificent Rhenish domain directly to Prussia, if she would give up Saxony. But Prussia still clung to Saxony. At any rate, she would not give up her claims until it was demonstrated that the proposed territories were at least equivalent to the Saxon lands in the number of "souls" and the amount of revenue. Then began a search for "souls" to meet the demands from Berlin.

Even the system was generalized. A new committee was set up, the Committee of Evaluations, which weighed and measured "the souls" which each of the powers would receive in Europe. But suddenly, in the very heart of the new committee, Prussia suddenly and violently declared that she would never give up Saxony. When Castlereagh intervened, he was snubbed in such a fashion by the representatives of Berlin that his English pride was wounded. He went to Talleyrand to pour out his wrath. Talleyrand caught the ball on the rebound. He immediately proposed a three-fold alliance of France, England, and Austria against Prussia and Russia. France would not want "any condition."

The treaty of January 3, 1815

Castlereagh was delighted, hurried to Metternich, and came back with a plan for a treaty. France, who promised an army of 150,000 men, agreed to ask nothing in return, even after a victory of the new "allies." Talleyrand agreed to this singular alliance, and the treaty was signed with great secrecy on January 3 by the representatives of France, Austria, and England. It seemed to open an era of new combinations for Europe. The Prince immediately informed the King in a letter which is nothing but a long shout of triumph, a sort of *Te Deum:*

> "Now, Sire, the coalition is dissolved, and forever. Not only is France no longer isolated in Europe, but Your Majesty already has a federated system such as fifty years of negotiations might not have succeeded in giving him. She marches together with two of the greatest powers, three states of the second rank (the states of Southern Germany), and soon all the states which follow principles and maxims which are quite different from the revolutionary principles and maxims. She will truly be the leader and the spirit of this union, formed for the defense of the principles which she was the first to proclaim."

This time his enthusiasm is explicable if one adopts the point of view which had guided him through the turmoil of Vienna. One cannot dispute the fact that it was of great advantage to have broken the coalition and to have restored France not only to her place among the nations, but also as an ally of England and Austria, which were always

dear to Maurice de Talleyrand. It is difficult for us, however, after a hundred and thirty years of experience, to share this great enthusiasm, which, sincere as it may be, is not without some willful excesses. To expose a hundred and fifty thousand Frenchmen to the danger of new battles so that Saxony should remain in the hands of its King, without France's gaining anything in the present or in the future, was a strange plan and if, as a consequence, Prussia was intimidated and finally gave up Saxony, what did France gain by it, except that Prussia, which had received the Rhineland in exchange, would menace France from Cologne and from Trêves, instead of menacing Austria from Dresden, since France had saved her from this peril?

The effects of the treaty

This is exactly what happened. The treaty remained a secret, but because of the new assurance shown by Austria and England, the Tsar guessed that some event, which he almost suspected, now made them invincible. He resigned himself, not without anger, and himself urged Prussia not to claim all of Saxony. But from then on, Alexander had to give up the idea of uniting all of Poland under his rule. He would simply keep the former Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which Napoleon had taken from Prussia, but would give Poznan back to Prussia. Prussia yielded, but then laid claim to every imaginable compensation: she had to have all she could of Poland, of Saxony, and of the Rhineland, and other lands as well. England supported her demands, especially in regard to the Rhineland. She worked for weeks to establish Prussia opposite France. "Since October 10," wrote Lord Castlereagh, "I have always urged the resumption of the policy which was so dear to Mr. Pitt, and which consists of putting Prussia in contact with the French on the left bank of the Rhine." The noble lord realized the "policy of Mr. Pitt" in January, 1815, and, what was really magnificent, thanks to the representative of France himself, since it was the treaty of January 3 which led up to the event. Thus with the simple promise that Mainz and the Palatinate would not be given to Prussia but to the Grand Duke of Hesse and to the King of Bavaria and that Luxemburg would be given to the King of the Netherlands, Talleyrand put up no opposition when all the rest of the rich Rhineland went to Prussia, which is really inconceivable.

Italy

Talleyrand was also ready to agree to anything if Parma were refused to Napoleon's wife and son, and if Naples were at last taken away from

his brother-in-law. Metternich and Talleyrand got together on the first point: Marie-Louise would be allowed to keep Parma if she would give up the rights which the Treaty of Paris had conferred on her son. She agreed without hesitating. After her death, Parma would be restored to the Bourbons, and thus Napoleon's son would not reign over a single village. Metternich was as well satisfied as Talleyrand, since they carried their hatred of Napoleon so far as to include his son.

Again Talleyrand knew how to give his sovereign great pleasure. "I take great interest in that," he wrote to him, "for by this means, the name of Bonaparte will be definitely struck off the list of sovereigns for the present and the future, since the isle of Elba belongs to him who possesses it only for life, and the son and the archduchess are to possess no independent state."

There remained the brother-in-law. Austria saw to it that the intrigues he was conducting in Italy would bring him to ruin. Louis XVIII, who was enraged that this "adventurer" was allowed to reign, even if it was only temporarily, spoke of sending a whole French army against him.

The close of the Congress

We shall not follow the Congress in its cruel work of carving up Europe. That is not our present undertaking. This task was finished by the end of February. The final act could have been signed at that time, and although a hundred of its articles consecrated that "right of conquest," which Talleyrand stigmatized in October, 1814, as well as "right of barter," he probably found it "good" and "noble," as he had the Treaty of Paris. Yet by consecrating the formation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, by establishing Prussia, which had otherwise become so powerful, on the Rhine, by doubling the Kingdom of Sardinia, and more generally, by strengthening certain states of Europe, often excessively, the treaties of Vienna aggravated the situation which the Treaty of Paris had created for France.

It must be recognized, however, that the Prince had the right to be satisfied. He had attained the difficult goal which he had set for himself when he came to Vienna, and he had even surpassed his hopes. He had only intended to restore France to her position among the nations of Europe and to win back the "respect" that was due her.

He had succeeded. Of course, it was very difficult to exclude a country so rich in the present, past, and future, from the reconstruction of Europe. "France was indispensable to Europe," wrote Jean Thiry, one of the latest historians of the Congress, "and without Talleyrand, the force of events themselves would have restored her to her rank." This is indeed

probable, but Talleyrand, it must be admitted, knew how to make the most of the position of France and to hasten the event. With remarkable authority, he had, in the name of his country and his king, made the fiercest conquerors of the humiliated country give in to him. He had done even better: by breaking up the coalition which was supposed to last for years, even after its victories, he had turned the conquerors of 1814 against each other for an instant, and by making some of them allies of France, he had forced the others to yield to him. At the beginning of March, 1815, the Prince was planning to derive the greatest benefits from this magnificent diplomatic achievement both for his country and himself. He thought that the King, in gratitude for a victory which did so much for the House of Bourbon, could recompense him only by keeping him in control of foreign affairs for a long time. He was hastening the execution of the Final Act of the Congress when a catastrophic event suddenly undid all his work by causing the coalition, now more hostile than ever, to blockade unfortunate France.

The return from Elba

Metternich was at a party when he learned of the escape from the isle of Elba and went to inform Talleyrand. "He remained impassible," wrote Metternich, "and we had the following laconic conversation.

"Talleyrand: 'Do you know where he is going?'

"I: 'The report says nothing about it.'

"Talleyrand: 'He will disembark somewhere on the coast of Italy and will rush to Switzerland.'

"I: 'He will go straight to Paris.' "

Talleyrand lost no time in recrimination, even though he had spent five months insisting that the former Emperor should be deported to a distant island. "I proposed one of the Azores," he wrote. "It is five hundred miles to any land." In December, he had insisted, "We must hurry to get rid of the man on the isle of Elba." As soon as he was informed of the event which he had wanted to prevent, he proposed that all the representatives of Europe, himself at the head, should sign a declaration which would place the escaped man under the ban of the nations. "I shall do everything possible," he wrote, "so they do not fall asleep here and so that the Congress will take a resolution that will remove Bonaparte from the rank which he was allowed to keep through an inconceivable weakness." Unaware of the lightning-like speed with which Napoleon was setting about the reconquest of his throne, he still hoped that this unprecedented action would show France the vanity of this mad attempt and thus would keep the country from receiving the

returned Emperor. Thus, upon the proposal of the French plenipotentiary, the eight powers who had signed the Treaty of Paris agreed to a declaration which Talleyrand drew up and which stated the anathema: "The powers declare that Napoleon Bonaparte is outlawed from social and civil relations, and that, as the enemy and disturber of the peace of the world, he has laid himself open to public prosecution."

This decree outlawing Napoleon was already made at Paris by Louis XVIII; one could "fall upon" the "brigand." Talleyrand had intended to serve both his King and France, which he made a member of the coalition that was re-formed against Napoleon. Thus, he declared, after the victorious coalition had overthrown Napoleon, it would have to spare the country which that victory had liberated from any further damage. We shall see later how great was his illusion. But was Talleyrand really serious? Could he have thought for an instant that when Napoleon was beaten, the coalition would not make France, which would be conquered along with him, pay cruelly? At any rate, he boasted to Louis XVIII of the excommunication of the "brigand" which he had won from Europe. "History furnishes no example," he wrote on the evening of March 13, "of such a rejection by the whole human race." Once again he deserved well of his King, as it must be recognized, for at one stroke he had engaged all Europe in a merciless war against the "brigand." "One can always treat with an enemy," he wrote again. "One does not remarry (allusion to Austria) a condemned man." The "condemned man" might now even have himself enthroned again at Paris: all was ready for his restoration to power. The sovereigns signed a treaty at Vienna on March 25 which renewed the clauses of the Treaty of Chaumont in 1814. Talleyrand put the signature of the King of France to it.

Napoleon, however, reinstalled himself in Paris on March 20. Louis XVIII had left the city the day before in a veritable panic. The King did not stop until he reached Gand, where he waited to see what would happen. Talleyrand remained in Vienna. The Congress was finishing its "works." It did not close until June 9 when the Final Act was signed. In the name of the King of France, the Prince signed the 121 articles which were the results of the difficult deliberations at Vienna. It has been said that the famous "immense fortune" was again considerably increased. As usual, Talleyrand had received bribes from everyone, and the King of Saxony had taken the precaution to give him six million in order to assure his help, though he probably would have given it for nothing. According to certain rumors, he even received money from both sides. Joachim Murat, who knew him well, sent him 800,000 francs,

which was nothing compared to the 3,700,000 francs which the Bourbons of Naples gave him to get rid of Murat. But Barras, who quotes these figures, is, as we know, suspect. The more that Talleyrand can be positively convicted of venality, the more must one refrain from accepting accusations which one cannot verify.

He finally left Vienna on June 10 to go to the King. His feelings were very different from what they would have been had Napoleon not returned and had he gone back to Paris wearing the halo of his success at Vienna.

32

HIS DIFFICULT RETURN TO THE MINISTRY

Talleyrand and the reaction

HE WAS annoyed by the way in which the King had fled not only from Paris but from the kingdom as well, but he was especially upset since he knew that a certain party which he detested had lost no time in winning over the King, who had taken refuge near Gand.

Louis was living there, surrounded by people who had revived all of the spirit of the emigration. Now Talleyrand knew how hostile this group was to the King's keeping him in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that since May, 1814 these "ghosts" had been clamoring for a complete counter-revolution and the banishment of all those who had worked for the Revolution. They considered Talleyrand one of the most detestable. The Prince thought that long before the events of March, 1815, too much attention had been paid to these "madmen." Since he had left his ministry in charge of the Count de Jaucourt, he had been in constant correspondence with this friend who had informed him of what was going on in Paris. Thus he knew of the incredible imprudences which had been committed by "the friends of the Count d'Artois," loud threats uttered against those who had acquired the "stolen" national properties, insults to certain military leaders, and, which was more serious, ill usage of the soldiers, alarming statements by certain ecclesiastics against the principles of the Revolution, and outrages against certain aspects of the Empire which were still popular. As early as September, 1814, Fouché had resumed his correspondence with the Prince. He was again thinking about a change of government and let Talleyrand in on his thoughts. And now Talleyrand's fears were realized: France welcomed Napoleon with open arms. The Bourbons and their faithful followers were again sent into exile. But instead of recognizing the errors which had prepared for the catastrophe, the new *émigrés* blamed it on the King's "weakness" in regard to the survivors of the Empire, on

concessions made to the principles of the Revolution, and on consideration given to those who had benefited from the Revolution. They demanded that a complete counter-revolution be started when Bonaparte was once again overthrown.

Talleyrand had very little desire to throw himself into this insane whirlpool at Gand. He was not sure that Louis XVIII would resist the general feeling, and he feared that if he rejoined the Court and the Government in exile he might no longer have the King's support. This support alone would be able to resist the violence that would be let loose against the "renegade bishop," who had "shamefully" been allowed to remain in foreign affairs. Talleyrand had shown no zeal for the work of the Congress after March, thus creating a useful alibi, as was his custom. Since he was convinced that a formidable invasion was being prepared and that Bonaparte would last no more than three months, he waited on the banks of the Danube for the end of this crisis. If an allied victory, which he thought was certain, would again give them the right to make Louis XVIII take up the men they wanted, he thought that he would be one of these, and in the first rank, moreover.

The Hundred Days

As soon as the Emperor entered Lyon, he granted a general amnesty to all those who had worked for his downfall in 1814. He had excepted only a few, such as Dalberg, Jaucourt, Marmont, and especially Talleyrand, whose property had been confiscated. Napoleon actually hoped to win back this valuable man, who, he guessed, was alarmed by the policies that the extreme royalists preached and had partly imposed before March. "He is still the man who knows the most about this century, the cabinets, and the peoples," he said to one of his ministers. "He left me, I myself left him rather abruptly. . . . We were not always of the same opinion; it happened more than once that he gave me good ones."

Despite his disillusions of April, 1815, Caulaincourt had been recalled to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Emperor. Napoleon thought of making use of the Duke de Vicence's friendship for Talleyrand. "Monsieur the Duke de Vicence," he wrote on April 22, "I authorize you to assure the Prince de Bénévent that his property will be restored, if he behaves like a Frenchman and renders me a few services. . . ." A letter from Caulaincourt, stating the Emperor's good intentions, was entrusted to Dufresne Saint-Léon, Talleyrand's former proxy for the government of Bénévent, who set out for Vienna. Two emissaries had already been sent: the Prince's natural son, General Flahaut, who was com-

pletely devoted to the Emperor, and the famous Casimir de Montrond, one of Talleyrand's friends, who was said to be authorized to offer him an income of 200,000 livres as the price for his compliance. But Flahaut had not been able to get past Stuttgart, and Montrond, who reached Vienna, had spent his time in vain efforts, especially in regard to the Empress Marie-Louise. Dufresne Saint-Léon saw Talleyrand, but found him absolutely unshakeable in his hostility towards the Emperor. He took back to Caulaincourt a letter in which the Prince's resolution was stated briefly and discreetly. "He (Saint-Léon) will tell you that I am well, that I am doing what I think you would do in my position, and that I love you," he wrote. He had told Montrond, "Read the declaration (of the Congress); it does not contain one word which does not agree with my opinion. This does not have to do with a war against France, moreover; it is against the man from the isle of Elbe." And in order to boast of this attitude to Louis XVIII, Talleyrand informed him of the overtures which the "usurper" had made to him.

Perhaps he was counting on this new claim to the confidence of Louis XVIII, when he finally left Vienna on June 10 to journey towards Belgium in short stages. He had to rejoin the "Court" at Gand; he did so with high resolves. "I shall do my duty," he had written to the Duchess de Courlande several days before, "but I shall not let myself be put out of my course by the fantasies and the nonsense of the *émigrés*."

The interview at Mons

Events hastened on during this voyage. Resolved to attack and to destroy the Prussian and English armies, which had already met in Belgium before the arrival of the allied Grand Army which was *en route* to the Rhine, the Emperor left Paris on June 11. After some ephemeral successes, he attacked Wellington's army on the eighteenth before Waterloo, and, after a bloody battle which he almost won three times, he suffered that frightful defeat which became an irreparable disaster when the French army collapsed. The Emperor went back to Paris on the twenty-second, where he was again forced to abdicate in favor of his son, thanks to Fouché's intrigues. The same Fouché, who had become the head of a provisory government, caused the failure of Napoleon II's proclamation and cleverly prepared for the King's return to Paris. Talleyrand was not one of the group this time. "Go hang yourself," they could have written to him, "treachery has been committed without you."

Talleyrand was at Aix-la-Chapelle on June 19 when he was informed of the victory of the "admirable Duke of Wellington," as he described

him. When he arrived at Brussels, he learned that the King had left Gand and had reached Mons, hoping to enter France behind the victorious allied armies. "I am going to rejoin him today," he wrote to the Duchess de Courlande on the twenty-third.

He was in the most complex state of mind when he arrived there on the evening of the twenty-third. Certainly, he was happy that the victory of the "admirable duke" precipitated Bonaparte's downfall. But he almost thought that it happened a bit too soon. He was afraid that the "fantasies and the nonsense of the *émigrés*" would alienate the King from him.

The King, as a matter of fact, did not seem at all disposed to throw himself into Talleyrand's arms again. But certain people, who made the Duke de Blacas, Louis' great favorite and privileged minister, responsible for the errors which had been committed, demanded that the King send him away. According to them, Louis XVIII could re-establish and maintain himself on the throne by entrusting Talleyrand not with a portfolio, no matter how important, but with the presidency of a Council and the direction of the affairs of the state. Talleyrand, who had just rendered the King such extraordinary services at Vienna, could have rendered him even more considerable services in the field of domestic policy if he had been consulted more often or if more attention had been paid to him. These people had been impatiently awaiting Talleyrand's arrival for weeks. Louis was awaiting him with less impatience. He was personally very jealous of his independence, anxious about his authority, and did not want to be given a "palace major-domo," especially since there was a question of his again being put into the hands of a man whom he did not like and even hated. Even the services which Talleyrand had done him irritated rather than pleased him. He thought that Talleyrand had boasted about them too much himself. "He boasts of having set the crown on my head a second time," he told Chateaubriand, a remark which reveals his irritation.

Since the Prince thought he was essential, as soon as he reached Mons he thought he ought to act in a high-handed manner. He was urged to ask for an audience with the King without delay, but since he had the erroneous idea that the King was hoping to see him, he planned to wait until he was asked. To those who urged him to pay a visit immediately, he replied, "I am not in a hurry." He even added a few more or less imprudent remarks which were carried back to the King, and which increased his secret irritation more than ever. "He threatens me with going back to Germany," exclaimed Louis.

Though Chateaubriand always detested Talleyrand, he too considered

him essential. He assured Louis that the Prince was simply "tired" and was resting; he offered to go see him and to get him to ask for an audience. The King consented. Talleyrand must indeed have thought himself really "essential," for his pride was based on asking for nothing. Let the King send for him and he would answer the invitation. Chateaubriand stated his fear that the displeased king might leave Mons without having made any sign towards his minister. "He will not dare," Talleyrand answered haughtily. Chateaubriand, who was greatly troubled, told the King that the Prince was still very tired and would wait. "As he wishes," answered the King drily, "I am leaving at three in the morning." When Talleyrand heard about this reply, he was alarmed. It was clear that Louis XVIII was far from considering him so indispensable. He jumped out of bed and rushed to the King in the middle of the night. He arrived when his coach was already passing through the gate. Talleyrand had the audacity to signal the postilion to stop. Louis leaned out and noticed the minister. In a very bad humor, the sovereign had his carriage sent away and returned to his rooms, where he received the Prince. Talleyrand offered his homages in a most agitated voice and offered his excuses. Louis listened to him without interrupting him and then said, probably in an ironic tone, "Prince, you are leaving us. The baths will do you good. Send us news of yourself." Then he arose, went back to his carriage, and left for Cambrai.

Talleyrand's pride was cut to the quick. Chateaubriand said that he "frothed at the mouth with rage," but the author of *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* often exaggerates in the manner of Saint-Simon. The minister certainly must have been exasperated. He was more uneasy, however, than angry. He waited for the King to return to a more favorable state of mind. The summons came a few hours later. Louis was satisfied with his rather cruel revenge for the "impertinence" of "this Périgord," and for having shown that he did not feel obliged to employ him. As soon as he left, he sent Chateaubriand a note which authorized the Prince to rejoin him. Talleyrand did not have to be told twice. "I am going to leave for Chateau-Cambrésis," he wrote to the Duchess de Courlande. "The King, whom I found here, is there." But he added, "I was hardly content with my first interview. Those around him are intoxicated by the success of our great, admirable Duke (Wellington). They are almost crazy with it. They have to calm down a bit, if I am to be good for anything." Thus he saved his dignity, but he burned up the roads in his efforts to overtake the sovereign.

He was still thinking of saving his dignity twenty years later when he wrote an account of this interview. According to his version, which

is completely different from Chateaubriand's, he incurred the King's passing displeasure only because he gave the wisest advice. He said that the King should not return to Paris behind the enemy armies nor establish himself in Paris surrounded by foreign bayonets, but that he should avoid the capital, which was certain to be occupied, and should go to Lyon to set up his government and to convoke the Chambers. Thus there would be no chance for such accusations as had been made in 1814 nor would he make the errors which had been committed then. The King was vexed, sent him away, and did not recall him until he was already on his way to Paris against his advice. "I gave up my own convictions," wrote Talleyrand, "and I followed the King to Cambrai to put myself, like him, in the English rearguard."

The declaration of Cambrai

This time Louis received him as if nothing unpleasant had ever taken place between them. The King took him back as a counselor for the few weeks of a crisis which could easily be foreseen. The King, who was intelligent, keen, a good observer, and highly critical, had often been aware of the errors that were being made during the last months of 1814 and the first ones of 1815, and blamed his brother, the Count d'Artois, as well as his friends. He had to have ministers who would know how to oppose the madness of this coterie, if they were not to involve him in similar, or even worse, errors. He would find these men among the opponents of a counter-revolution, Talleyrand first of all. He would dismiss them when he felt more secure. He was inclined to let the Prince direct this second restoration in its uncertain beginnings. Talleyrand was aware of this and became as bold as ever.

There was need of a declaration that would facilitate the King's return by reassuring all those whom his previous policies had offended. The King entrusted Talleyrand with its preparation. He took it to the Council in which the princes were seated. While it promised to add to the Charter articles which would guarantee security to all, to assure the "unity of the ministry," another guarantee that affairs would be well managed, and to forget all that was past, the declaration also announced that the King "for the dignity of the throne, for the interest of his subjects, for the interest of Europe, would except the instigators and authors of that horrible plot from his pardon." But Talleyrand gave all his attention to the passage in which the King admitted "the errors" which his "government" had made. Naturally these words aroused the most violent irritation in the princes. The Count d'Artois exclaimed,

that "by such misplaced expressions," the royalty would be degraded. Talleyrand answered at once that "these expressions were necessary, and consequently were well placed." He had evidently decided to sacrifice to necessity the rather paradoxical friendship which the King's brother had shown him upon his return from exile in April, 1814, for he added, "The King has made mistakes, his affections have led him astray. There is nothing so terrible about that." The Count d'Artois saw his point. "Am I the one whom he wants to indicate indirectly?" he exclaimed. "Yes, since Monsieur has put the discussion on this footing. Monsieur has done a great deal of harm." Artois was enraged by this insult, and declared, "The Prince de Talleyrand forgets himself." Talleyrand parried, "Yes, I fear so, but I am carried away by the truth." When the Duke de Berry, the younger son of the Count d'Artois, began to make threats, Louis XVIII intervened, saying, "Enough, nephew. It is up to me only to deal out justice for what is said in my presence and in my Council." When Berry persisted, the King said, "Let us change the subject." The declaration was published just as it had been conceived.

This was a victory for Talleyrand, but a Pyrrhic victory. During the first restoration he had greatly benefited by the friendship of the Count d'Artois, who had often protected him from the hatred of the counter-revolutionists. Now they were all up in arms against the minister, who once again became the "renegade," the "apostate," whose presence in the ministry was hateful. Talleyrand, for whom the King actually had little regard, soon paid dearly for the attitude which he adopted at Cambrai and which he maintained in Paris.

He was determined to maintain it because, since he had burnt his bridges behind him, he wanted the government to accentuate its opposition to counter-revolutionary ideas. He would have been surprised, however, if anyone had predicted to him at Cambrai on June 29 that within a week he would bring into the government his former colleague, rival, and accomplice, the Duke d'Otrante, the former terrorist, Fouché of Nantes.

Fouché reappears

I have told elsewhere at some length how Fouché, as the result of incredible intrigues and prodigious plots, had become the head of the Governmental Commission and had convinced everyone that he was the only man capable of making the public accept the King's return to the Tuileries. "Everyone" is the right word, because even the most

die-hard Parisian royalists were advocating his candidacy for the ministry of General Police, with which Barras and Napoleon had entrusted him. Talleyrand did not have much to say about it, since as the King advanced on Paris behind Blücher and Wellington, emissaries of every party, including Fouché's private agents, told him repeatedly that he was exposing himself to the greatest danger if he did not make the Duke d'Otrante a member of his government before he entered Paris.

Talleyrand was no less unyielding on this point than the Baron de Vitrolles and other friends of the Count d'Artois. The news which reached him also said that the Duke d'Otrante was master of the capital, which he had, moreover, just thrown open to the allied troops. The Duke of Wellington, who was pleased with his relationship with the head of the provisory government, also advised that he be conciliated with the presentation of a governmental portfolio. Louis XVIII had become indignant when this subject was first broached to him. "Never!" he exclaimed on July 4. Chateaubriand wrote bitterly, "Never in twenty-four hours!" Talleyrand went to Neuilly on July 5, where, in the presence of Wellington and Pozzo di Borgo, he had a conference with the Duke d'Otrante, who had left Paris secretly. As a result of this meeting, Talleyrand was convinced that Fouché's presence in the ministry would help to avoid all troublesome incidents. Talleyrand did not like him at all; they had hated and had fought against each other; then they had been drawn together, reconciled for a while, then they had separated again. But the Prince was not averse to having him associated with his government, for perhaps he felt a wicked joy at seeing this regicide patronized by the Faubourg Saint-Germain and by the representatives of the thrones of Europe, and, after all, the King's acceptance of this "voter" of January, 1793, seemed to him to be a sort of personal guarantee of safety. If the brother of Louis XVI did not condemn Fouché's past, how could the presence of the ex-bishop of Autun be considered scandalous? Compared to Fouché, who had sent a King of France to the scaffold and had had the royalists of Lyon shot, the "apostate," who had had no one shot or guillotined, seemed like a saint.

When he returned to the Château d'Arnouville, near Saint-Denis, the King waited for the time when he would be able to enter Paris without taking any risk. Talleyrand saw the King and convinced him. "Do everything that you think useful in my service," the sovereign finally said. The next day, July 7, Fouché was named Minister of the General Police, and was introduced by Talleyrand into the King's chamber where he took his oath. Chateaubriand saw the two men pass—or at least he said so—Talleyrand limping along on Fouché's arm. "Vice

leaning on crime," wrote René. When they came out together and took the same carriage, Pozzo di Borgo said to his neighbor, "I should certainly like to hear what those two lambs are saying to each other."

Louis XVIII entered Paris the next day, the eighth, in the midst of foreign bayonets, and re-established himself in the Tuileries, where the Prince de Talleyrand, who had been named President of the Council, brought him the list of his colleagues.

33

TALLEYRAND'S MINISTRY

The first cabinet

TALLEYRAND'S ministry, the first under the Restoration, was composed of the Prince in Foreign Affairs, the Duke d'Otrante in the General Police, the Baron Pasquier in Justice, and "provisorily" in the Interior, the Baron Louis in Finance, Marshal Gouvion Saint-Cyr in War, and the Count de Jaucourt in the Maritime department. The Prefecture of Police was given to the young Elie Decazes, who was then ignored but who in a short while won the King's favor and helped to overthrow the ministry and to make his own political fortunes. Baron Louis had brought him to the Prince, who hardly knew him and who considered him conceited, which was true, and mediocre, which was false. This cabinet, which was called the Talleyrand-Fouché ministry, combined many values, and thus deserved to govern more than the ten weeks it did. But its fate could not be avoided. Within and without, the new cabinet found itself facing a hopeless situation to which it was doomed to succumb.

The second restoration gave rise to much more violent sentiments than the first, at least in the royalist party. The extraordinary downfall of the royal government upon Napoleon's return seemed to teach only one lesson, according to the friends of the throne, and that lesson was quite different from that which Talleyrand gave at Cambrai. The current was too strong for a little group of reasonable men to dam it up even for an instant, much less force it back. Elections were drawing near, with limited suffrage which left most of the votes to the rich bourgeoisie. For the time being, the upper bourgeoisie was as much in favor of the most complete reaction as were the former *émigrés,* and there was hardly any doubt that within three weeks there would be an immense majority determined to practice counter-revolutionary policies. This policy would certainly be administered by that group of returned *émigrés* of whom Talleyrand said that "they had learned nothing and had forgotten nothing." They did not forget especially that His Ex-

cellency, the Prince de Talleyrand, President of His Majesty's Council, had been one of the active partisans of the Revolution from the start, and they were already throwing it up to him. "You want to bring back the *Ancien Régime,* and that is not possible," the Prince exclaimed to some of these "madmen," one of whom, pretending to laugh, exclaimed, "But, Monseigneur, who can dream of making you bishop of Autun again?"

The ministry, which was made up of moderates, was not entirely in agreement about what was to be done. Should they resist or try to dodge? Should they put up a determined opposition or join in the uproar? The ministers were divided in their opinions. This division is revealed when one examines the results of the threats which were made in the declaration of Cambrai against the "instigators and authors" of "the horrible plot" which had prepared the downfall of the throne a hundred days before. Talleyrand, who had allowed these threats to be included so that the rest of the declaration would be passed, had hoped that they would be enough. But now pursuits and proscriptions were demanded. The Prince did not want this hateful task. He said in the Council that the job of designating the culprits should be left the Chamber which was about to be elected. Fouché was of the opposite opinion. He preferred to take advantage of the time that he was still in power to have the list drawn up and closed. He brought in about a hundred names, a strange mixture of true and false "culprits," of illustrious and obscure "suspects," of "criminals" and of "innocents." Thus he intended to discredit himself the list which he had prepared. Talleyrand had to yield to the King, who supported Fouché's proposal. He simply struck off forty-three names out of a hundred.

The royal decree appeared on July 24; it brought the chief "culprits," with Ney, Labédoyère, and Lavalette at the head, before the courts, and exiled thirty-eight suspects from Paris. "An awkward, senseless action, which could create nothing but difficulties and dangers for the royal government," Talleyrand wrote later, and for once the *Memoirs* really echo the opinion he gave in the Council. Nonetheless, his signature appeared on the decree which had been inspired by the Machiavellism, vain though it was, of the ex-citizen Fouché of Nantes.

It was completely in vain, for instead of saving the ministry, this concession only encouraged its adversaries. From day to day the elections seemed to indicate that there would be a new Chamber, led by those who were already being called the "Ultras," which would surely do away with this "Jacobin ministry." Even most of the prefects who had been named by this ministry, turned against it and collaborated

in the election of the "Ultras." They closed their eyes to the reaction which arose most violently in the departments, especially on those of the Midi, and which has been called the White Terror, not without great exaggeration. Murders were committed, resulting in the worst public excitement. The ministry deplored them, but since even its own agents did not serve it well, could do nothing to stop them. In twenty departments, anarchy reigned in the name of "order." The ministry could do nothing. "It is very painful," Talleyrand wrote, "to work all day and to get nowhere. I am beginning to be really tired of this situation."

This was not his great concern, however, but the excesses of the foreign occupation, which also favored general anarchy.

Talleyrand and the foreign occupation

Talleyrand had thought that by associating the King of France with the European coalition against "the man from the isle of Elba," France would escape the consequences of a new allied victory. He had hoped that the fiction which he created would be respected, but he hardly hoped so when he came to power on July 9.

Indeed, when Wellington entered France after Waterloo, he seemed to uphold this fiction. He had reminded the Anglo-Prussian troops that "their respective sovereigns were the allies of His Majesty, the King of France, and that France was thus to be considered as a friendly country." A proclamation of the English generalissimo to the French people stated the same sentiments. But the terrible Blücher had at once declared his intention to pay no heed to what he called a bad joke. He was the first to urge the Prussians and their German auxiliaries to treat France not simply as a conquered country but as a "criminal" country which had to be "punished." It is true that shortly afterwards Schwarzenberg entered France at the head of a great allied army and agreed with Wellington's statement. Inspired by Tsar Alexander, Barclay de Tolly, the Russian general-in-chief, spoke the same language. But Napoleon had seen the truth when, in his act of abdication, he declared that he was "sacrificing himself to the hatred of the enemies of France," and added, "May they be sincere in their declarations and really have a grudge against me only."

Actually, the allied leaders wished to avoid any popular uprising, then to have the royal government dissolve Napoleon's army, which though it had withdrawn to the Loire and could hardly constitute a formidable menace to the million allied soldiers, still could become a possible element of resistance in case of overly cruel treatment. As soon as they reached Paris behind the military leaders, the ministers of the

foreign powers demanded that the "army of the Loire" be disbanded. To avoid offense to the pride of the French government, Metternich wrote a note to Talleyrand in which he pretended to want nothing but the assurance of the public peace in France as in Europe, but Nesselrode, who was more brutal, demanded the measure as an "imperative condition" in the name of the Tsar and his allies. Talleyrand feared the presence of these "brigands of the Loire" as much as Metternich did. Without even consulting the Council, he had Louis XVIII give the order to disband, without even reflecting, as Henry Houssaye wrote, that he "was handing over France, bound hand and foot, to all the violences of the soldiery, to all the demands of Europe."

Blücher lost no time before he began to act not simply as a conqueror, but as a brutal leader of the occupation. He had had the Pont d'Iéna mined as early as July 7, and had given the order to have it destroyed. When he learned about this order, Talleyrand had protested at once to the Count de Goltz, the Prussian minister, who sent the letter on to Blücher. He replied, "The bridge will be destroyed, and I want M. de Talleyrand to be there first of all." He was a delightful soldier. The Prince immediately warned the King, who had a great deal of pride, and addressed a letter to Goltz, in which he said, "As for me, if it were necessary, I would go on the bridge; they could have us destroyed, if they wish." Wellington intervened in his turn, and had the execution of the order postponed until the arrival of the King of Prussia, who countermanded it. But Blücher avenged himself by urging his soldiers on to the worst violences.

The allied ministers, however, who had all arrived at Paris, had formed themselves into a "permanent conference," which alone was to set the conditions of the occupation and then of the peace. It finally became clear that the famous fiction of Vienna was no longer acceptable, and that in spite of Talleyrand's protests, Europe was going to treat France as a conquered enemy who was completely at her mercy. To keep Talleyrand from again creating the sort of division which had succeeded so well at the Congress, these ministers decided that they would allow collective negotiations only and they asked Talleyrand no longer to "send his notes separately, but to the ministers of the four Courts in a single dispatch." In vain did the Prince pretend not to understand and try to get by the order. His notes were returned to him, unless they were addressed to "the conference."

These notes had to do with the incredible abuses, the frightful excesses, the unheard-of assaults which were being perpetrated by the allied troops in two-thirds of the country. They were such that in August there began to be spontaneous acts of resistance, which led to

some fear of an insurrection in the rural districts. Talleyrand pointed out the danger to the allied ministers. He had Louis XVIII write a letter to the sovereigns in which he declared that "if the allies continued to treat his subjects as enemies, he would withdraw from the kingdom and would demand shelter from the King of Spain." The allies answered "that the troops had to live," although France was paying 1,750,000 francs a day for their maintenance (more than twenty-four million francs in present currency).

The allied ministers, however, began to feel some uneasiness because of the reports which were reaching them. They proposed an ordinance to regulate requisitions. Talleyrand signed it on August 19, but the military commanders paid so little attention to it that he soon wrote to the conference, "The conduct of your generals is worse than before the ordinance."

Talleyrand was in a tight spot. He too feared a sudden national uprising, which, if it took place, would heighten the miseries of France. He also feared that the situation might be turned against him. After all, had he not announced in the spring of 1815 that, thanks to his precautions, France would not be treated as an enemy by the coalition? He had been deceived, and already certain actions were taking shape which were destined to put him in an awkward position. Thus while he did not cease his protests, he was accused of not knowing how to refuse the allies anything. On August 12 in the full Council, Fouché drew a paper from his pocket which he asked permission to read. It was a report to the King in which were depicted in vivid and sometimes violent terms the frightful situation of the country, crushed by foreigners, whose excesses Fouché denounced. "This war," he added, "which was undertaken for the triumph of moderation and of justice will equal the barbarism of those deplorable and notorious invasions which history recalls with nothing but horror." The Duke d'Otrante had been asked to keep his patriotic recriminations to himself. He immediately had countless copies made of the report which were circulated through Paris and soon through the whole country, to the annoyance of the allies. But Talleyrand had seen at once that Fouché had personal aims and that since he saw how the country was enraged, he was trying to avoid responsibility and that, as an expert politician, he was preparing himself for a new role by breaking away for the ministry.

Negotiations of the peace

The negotiation of the peace had begun with the start of the occupation, but it was being prolonged because of the demands of the allied

powers. Here again Talleyrand had to admit that he had been deluded at Vienna when he thought that adding the King of France to the coalition would be enough to save France from the consequences of a war that was supposedly against Napoleon. It was clear from the start that the country would have to suffer new mutilations, not to mention a crushing indemnity. When the ministers presented the plan for a treaty on September 19, Talleyrand pretended to suffer from the most complete deception. This plan deprived France of Philippeville, Marienburg, Givet, Charlemont, Condé, Sarrelouis, Landau, Fort Joux, the department of Mont-Blanc, and Savoy; demanded the destruction of Fort Huningue; fixed upon a war contribution of 600 millions and an indemnity of 200 millions for the reconstruction of a line of fortresses facing the new French frontiers; finally, it provided for an occupation of twelve places on the frontier by 150,000 allied soldiers, supported at the expense of France, for a minimum of three years and a maximum of seven.

Talleyrand protested against the very principle of these demands. "To demand concessions, there has to be a conquest; to have a conquest, there has to be a state of war." He pointed out that since the treaty of March 25 made the King of France the ally of the powers, and that since he could not be at war with them, he ought not to be deprived of an inch of his territory. Such was the substance of his note of September 20. But he knew that he had made an objection which could have no possible effect. He had to yield to the wishes of Europe and to put his signature to a document which cruelly belied the assurances which he had given to Louis XVIII and to France. While he continued to protest in his note of September 24, he already accepted in principle all the demands which had been made. He was probably once more resigned to signing something of which he disapproved, but fate spared him this mortification. His ministry broke up.

The downfall

There had been no doubt about the event for several weeks. The ministry was too divided. Talleyrand had a grudge against Fouché because of the famous report he had read in the Council on August 12. He had shrugged his shoulders during the reading of this report and, when it was over, had pretended to consider it a piece of stupidity. Fouché guessed that he was again his enemy and began to undermine his position. Talleyrand, in his turn, intended to rid himself of this troublesome colleague. But their mutual adversaries, however, intended to get rid of them both.

The elections were near an end. The results were already known. The Chamber which was elected, the future "unfindable" Chamber, was more royalist than the King and forced him to do its bidding. These deputies were already saying that they had to do away with a "Jacobin" ministry in which an unfrocked bishop sat side by side with a former regicide and terrorist. The opposition was especially strong against Fouché. I have quoted elsewhere the infamous terms of certain libels against the minister of the General Police. The royalists now blushed for the support which some of them had given to this regicide in July, thanks to which he had entered the government. Because of this opposition, Talleyrand conceived the rather mad idea that he could save his cabinet by throwing off such a heavy weight. He did not dare to dismiss Fouché, however, for it might have been said of this terrible man, as it had been supposedly said about him himself, that all the governments which had employed him were dead because of his disgraces. He intended to have him hand in his resignation. I have described elsewhere, in the terms of Vitrolles, the secretary of the Council, a scene of high comedy when Talleyrand, staring at Fouché, suddenly began to speak of the prestige of the minister to the United States, a post which was then vacant, and to praise the charms of America, where he had once lived. While he enumerated the natural graces of its forests and rivers, Fouché began to stare at him so fixedly with his red-rimmed eyes that he started to stammer. The Duke d'Otrante arose and left the Council, but he returned the next morning, apparently unaffected by the attractions of North America.

Something had to be done. Talleyrand went to the King and had no trouble convincing him of the necessity of parting with a minister whom he had barely tolerated. The Duke d'Otrante was named minister at Dresden on September 19 and resigned his portfolio, which was given to Decazes. The Prefect of Police had been actively working against his minister for eight weeks, and, to Talleyrand's joy, had ruined him with the King. Talleyrand took this young Elie Decazes into his favor, and soon entrusted him with the direction of affairs. What Talleyrand did not know was that once he became a minister, Decazes would as soon be rid of him as of Fouché.

Talleyrand was greatly deceived in thinking that he had saved himself by ruining Fouché. The deputies, who had arrived in Paris, were saying, "The King has done well to send away Fouché, but when will he send away the other?"

"The other, what other?"

"M. de Talleyrand himself."

Such was the real opinion of the King as well. We know that he had always had an antipathy for the man which nothing could soften. This antipathy again became so plain that the Prince could remain under no illusion, but he was still convinced that "in such a difficult situation," no one could replace him. Since he thought that his cabinet was still too divided or too weak, even after Fouché's departure, he thought of persuading the sovereign to assign him the task of forming another, but first of all, he had to be sure that he had not lost the "confidence" of the King. He used the negotiations with the allied ministers as a pretext. The King had to grant new authority to the President of the Council so that he would be better able to represent the country.

"As for us," he added, "despite our devotion to the service of Your Majesty, we should not know how to face such a difficult situation nor the opprobrium which may be cast upon us unless Your Majesty guarantees us his formal support in regard to and against all. If he is not of such a mind, we ask the King this very day to choose new counselors."

Louis XVIII had let him speak on. After a moment of silence, he said simply, "Well, then, I shall take another minister."

The dismissal was clear and he had to be resigned to it. Talleyrand was bitterly wounded. He wrote to the Duchess de Courlande on September 25, "We are leaving without any compliments. There has never been anything more cut and dried than the *Official Journal*. There is not a single word about us, no more than if we had not existed. The ingratitude is not disguised enough." But in his *Memoirs,* he wrote, "I may say that I retired from public affairs with no regret and with the resolution never again to undertake their direction."

If he left without regrets, he did not leave without profits. No matter what he said about the King's "ingratitude," he soon knew that it was not complete. A few days after he had been named minister of state, Talleyrand received the post of grand chamberlain which he had held under Napoleon. "All that," he admitted, "is most convenient." He was assured of an increase of 100,000 livres in his income. "I have spent thirty years of my life thinking of nothing except what could be useful to my country," he wrote. "Today I am busy with my own affairs, which I had completely neglected." One really wonders in what circumstances he had ever neglected them.

PART FIVE

THE LAST MISSION

34

THE AFTERMATH OF THE DOWNFALL

Dorothy

TALLEYRAND was sincerely "charmed and charming" at this time. He was enjoying the delicate pleasures of private life. This sixty-two-year-old man knew a complete love, perhaps for the first time in his life. How many women, though, had he seemed to "love," some for their beauty, others for their wit, many for the use he could make of them! For none of them had he felt the sort of tender exaltation which he felt for the young Dorothy de Courlande, who had become his niece through diplomatic maneuvers. In none of the twenty or so women he had known intimately in the course of half a century had he found so many entrancing qualities. "Beauty without grace is bait without a hook," he used to say. The young wife of Edmond de Périgord, the future Duchess de Dino, had enough beauty to act as bait, and too much grace to lose what she caught. Clever as he was, this sexegenarian had nibbled at the hook, and for once, he had really been caught.

Dorothy's magnificent black eyes, the only beauty in her little face, were enough to make it striking, though she wrote, with some coquetry, that they were "so large that they are out of proportion with my face, which is reduced to nothing." But it was her mind that was so captivating—a free, original, brilliant, cultivated mind. Her character was forceful, her will firm, and her personality so strong that she had her way with everyone.

Daughter of a russified Balt and a Prussian woman, reared by an Italian priest, related to Austrian, German, and Spanish families, she had once wanted to marry the distinguished Pole, Adam Czartoriski, who jilted her, and it was only for spite that at sixteen, she accepted the handsome but mediocre Edmond de Périgord, whom the Tsar, the suzerain of Courlande, recommended and almost forced upon her. She never loved him any more than he loved her, since he married her because of his illustrious uncle's request to Alexander. Though she bore him three children, the future Duke de Valençay, Prince de Sagan, the

future Marquis de Talleyrand, Duke de Dino, and the future Countess de Castellane, Dorothy lived apart from her indifferent husband from the very start. They became Duke and Duchess de Dino in 1817, thanks to the King of the Two Sicilies, and finally separated, which would have scandalized no one if, when Edmond left the house on the Rue Saint-Florentin, Dorothy had not remained there as the real mistress of the house, doing the honors of the salon and of the table with incredible ease. "Mistress of the house—mistress plain and simple," said many people. Savary, who as minister of Police could have had information, thought, as early as 1813, that closer bonds than affection united the uncle and niece. Molé, who was the Chief Justice at the time and who was also well informed, wrote "his mistress," as if the fact could not be doubted. Everyone said that they were lovers and many believed it, but there is no positive proof of such a relationship.

Bitter opposition to the ministers

Not more than three months went by before the Prince felt the desire to return to public life. This desire was revealed only by the bitter criticism which, as usual, he directed against his successor, the Duke de Richelieu, and his two former colleagues, Pasquier and Decazes, whom he rightly suspected of having planned his downfall. When he learned that the Duke had been summoned by the King, he made one of his typical remarks, of which the Abbé de Pradt spoke. Richelieu had been in the service of the Tsar during his twenty-five years as an *émigré,* especially as the governor of Odessa. "A fine choice, indeed," exclaimed Talleyrand, "M. de Richelieu certainly knows the Crimea the best of any man in France." But a few weeks later, he showed the keenest emotion at the news of the onerous treaty signed by the Duke on November 20, 1815. "You are well pleased that my name is not there," he wrote to the Duchess de Courlande. "Some means of consoling the King must be found, and here is one: it is perhaps fortunate that the terms of the treaty are so severe; people will be forced to conclude that these clauses were imposed." Thus he wished to insinuate that he at least would have kept up appearances. He knew, however, that all his cleverness would not have been enough to save a single one of the cities that were given up, that, since nothing remained of his Machiavellian tactics at Vienna, France was condemned to cede all the entrances to her territory, and that like Richelieu, he himself would have signed this treaty, probably without the tears which this good Frenchman could not hold back when he brought it before the Council.

Now that he was out of power, Talleyrand especially attacked the

forces of reaction. The "unfindable Chamber" had abandoned itself to all its counter-revolutionary passions.

One might have expected that these "madmen" of the Palais-Bourbon would thus compromise the King and his crown, but who would have thought that ministers would deplore these excesses and yet be unable to stop them? He bitterly blamed his successors, the leaders of the majority, Pasquier, a former high official of the Emperor, and Decazes, one of Napoleon's tools. They and their colleagues were conspirators plain and simple, who, after having betrayed him in September, 1815, would also lead poor Richelieu to his ruin. His remarks were so bitter that everyone thought they revealed a desire for power that was almost the equivalent of mania.

He contented himself for a year with making increasingly bitter remarks to his faithful friends. The King and even the ministers themselves seemed to be unaware of them. Since the counter-revolutionary Chamber was still showing the violence of youth, no one seemed to think of recalling a man who was so hateful to the "Ultras" as the ex-citizen Talleyrand-Périgord. He declared freely that if Louis XVIII were offended by the acts of the Chamber, as it was said, a determined leader of the government, supported by the King, could put an end to these "insanities"—he even said "ignominies."

Finally he lost patience and even prudence. After all, since he saw that he was being left out of things, he intended to identify himself as the only courageous adversary of the reaction and of the ministry which tolerated it, and, above all, as the champion of the finest patriotism.

On November 18, 1816, fourteen months after his dismissal, Talleyrand was dining with the English ambassador, Sir Charles Stuart. As they left the table, the Prince noticed the Baron Pasquier and took him aside. He had never been seen in such a fury. "Are your deputies also going to crawl in the filth of your ministers?" he suddenly shouted to the Minister of the Interior. "It is not such a cabinet that France needs, but a cabinet of men who have their roots in the country . . . The treaty is a scandal for France. The cabinet of which I was the president did nothing but what was noble and great. It is only a cabinet of that kind which can save France; the present cabinet dishonors her." Let us point out that the slander was aggravated by the fact that the scene took place in a foreign embassy. The Prince, however, seemed to want to hold nothing back, for, returning to Pasquier, who was about to withdraw, he exclaimed, "Monsieur Pasquier, be sure that what I said just now is that a Minister of Police (Decazes) is nothing but a —— (he mentioned a grossly insulting word) and that a Chamber can have

no relationship with him without degrading itself." Pasquier, who was worn out, replied in a dignified tone, "Monsieur, all the King's ministers seem to me to have the same rights to the respect and consideration of the public and it is impossible for me to admit any distinction between them."

The next day, Paris rang with the incredible scene, in which, contrary to all his habits, the Prince had outrageously offended propriety, which he usually placed before everything else. The Council was informed of the incident by Pasquier on the twenty-first. The ministers asked the King to forbid the Prince entry to the Tuileries, and Louis did so immediately in a rather sharp letter. Talleyrand answered with a remark that was more impertinent than dignified. The Prince did not appear in the Tuileries from that time on, but when there was a ceremony in commemoration of the death of Louis XVI two months later on January 21, 1817, Talleyrand came into the nave of Saint Denis to take his place among the great officers of the Crown. The grand master of ceremonies, the Marquis de Dreux-Brézé, stopped him before he sat down and asked him, "by order of His Majesty," simply to take his place among the Chamber of Peers.

Talleyrand, who had hoped to have his way, seemed to be surprised. He pretended to disdain the princes. "They are hurt because I have done good to all of them; that offends them and they are taking revenge," he wrote to his usual confidante, the Duchess de Courlande.

But it was not in his character to plunge into unalterable opposition. Nor was it in the character of Louis XVIII to exasperate such a dangerous man by a prolonged disgrace. One of them must have made some secret overture, and the other must have been satisfied with it. It was said that the Duke of Wellington, who had remained on the best of terms with the former president of the Council, intervened, and as the commander of the troops of occupation, he was still a man of influence. The King let the grand chamberlain know at the end of February that the Tuileries were again open to him, and he reappeared there with all the ease that he had always shown in similar circumstances.

Even though he had not wished to carry his public disgrace to extremes, Louis XVIII was more determined than ever not to "employ" Talleyrand, whom he detested. When the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle met in 1818 and the Duke de Richelieu demanded and obtained the total evacuation of France by the allied powers, there was some talk of making Talleyrand his assistant. Richelieu cared no more for the idea than did Louis XVIII, and the former plenipotentiary at Vienna

remained outside these new European assizes. He was cut to the quick, and began a secret campaign against Richelieu, who, he said, "had neither talent nor ingenuity." But when Richelieu, an honest man, grew weary of the intrigues which were going on about him, and offered his resignation to the King, the King refused it in a way that left no doubts about his continued hostility to Talleyrand. "You reduce me," he said to the president of the Council, "to the deplorable extremity of recalling M. de Talleyrand, whom I neither like nor esteem." The Count d'Artois was of the same opinion, and begged Richelieu "to spare the King and France from the misfortune and the shame of returning to M. de Talleyrand." But since the prime minister persisted in his resolution, the King turned, not to Talleyrand, but to Decazes, who agreed to form a new cabinet, the presidency of which was to be entrusted to General Dessoles, simply as a matter of form. There was no longer any question of Talleyrand. The Prince thought that he had once more been tricked by Decazes, whom he despised. He already extended his furious rage to include the dynasty which he had restored and whose downfall he was already predicting, while pretending to grieve over it. "It is most painful," he wrote, "to see an organization for which one has done so much perishing before one's eyes." "It saddens me a great deal," he added.

His gloomy retirement

He really was sad. When he retired from public life, he could have found private happiness and life might have been sweet for him, if he had not been tormented by ambition. He still had a great deal of prestige, and he also had an immense fortune which allowed him to live in a way which few men can realize. He enjoyed the richest luxuries at his magnificent Parisian mansion or his princely estate of Valençay. Wherever he went, everything was prepared to satisfy his tastes, and when he returned to the waters of Bourbon-l'Archambault every year, his arrival was greeted with respect and homage. The Duchess de Dino hardly ever left him; she continued to be his joy. Honors, fortune, luxury, were not enough. Dorothy saw to it that everyone about him showed him a devotion that was almost devout. The greatest egoists have such privileges.

But the ranks of his faithful friends were being thinned out by death. The death of the Duchess de Courlande, his closest confidante, left an empty place in his life. He used to call her his "angel." "I shall regret her to my dying day, and I shall witness its approach without sorrow,"

he wrote. Another death troubled him in a different fashion. His old uncle, the Cardinal de Talleyrand, the archbishop of Paris, died at 85 on October 20, 1821.

One evening when he was dining at the house of an English lady, Mrs. Crawford, the Emperor's death at Saint Helena was announced. They were prepared for the news. A short time before when he learned that Napoleon was struggling painfully against his illness, Talleyrand said simply, "A cannon ball, four or five years ago, would have put a better end to this extraordinary life." And now all was over. "What an event!" exclaimed Mrs. Crawford, who was deeply moved. Only the Prince seemed cold. "It is no longer an event," he said finally, "it is news."

He was pleased with these sharp, cutting words, but how was it that the "news" did not awaken a flood of memories mixed with complex emotions? All these deaths had the same effect on him, more or less secretly. They buried the past, but the past of which he was a part, and thus they relegated and almost buried him.

He felt the need to act, to prove to himself and to others that he was still very much alive by taking on a role about the nature of which he had indeed hesitated since his retirement from public life.

35

TALLEYRAND JOINS THE LIBERAL OPPOSITION

The opposition among the peers

HE WANTED to come back, but he could come back by two rather different methods: making himself liked or making himself feared. He had resolved to make himself feared. He still had one battlefield, limited though it was, where his return would create a sensation: the Luxembourg. He assumed the role of an opponent of counter-revolutionary policies in the Chamber of Peers, an opponent who spoke in the name of great principles.

In 1814 he had jeered at the "patriarchs of the Revolution," the "old lovers of liberty," and now he, who had restored the lily throne, was going to play the very role of "patriarch of the Revolution," and "lover of liberty." Liberty, he said, in its most precious aspect, the liberty of the press, was being threatened, for Richelieu, who had returned to power, had presented the Chambers with a plan which attempted the crime by re-establishing censorship. One smiles when one reads what Talleyrand wrote on July 17, 1821. "I am staying here a few days to cast my vote, useless as it may be, against censorship, but the doctrines which I have professed all my life must be upheld." He excelled in these audacious statements which made his life seem a very model of fidelity to ideals.

Villèle, Richelieu's successor, introduced a new law about the suppression of the misdemeanors of the press on February 26, 1822, and Talleyrand again spoke against it. He went back to 1814, and recalled under what conditions the throne of the Bourbons had been restored. "The Senate of the Empire, which has been judged with cruel lightness, and, I may say, with great ingratitude, still surrounded by Bonaparte's bayonets which were not yet all destroyed, hastily drew up a constitution, which was undoubtedly imperfect but which expressed France's dearest wish, the return of the House of Bourbon and the most

important principle of all freedoms, the freedom of the press." The Duke of Fitz-James arose to reply. He intended to turn his answer into an execution, for he personally had little use for Talleyrand and constantly mocked this political Proteus, who at one moment boasted about his share in the Assembly which had destroyed the old monarchy, and at another moment boasted about having restored it twenty-five years later. The Duke became so sarcastic that all eyes were fixed upon the man against whom this violent counter-offensive was directed. They were waiting for a reply, but if there were times when Talleyrand knew how to defend himself with a single word, there were others when he knew how to slip away as if he had not been touched. He had pretended to follow his noble colleague's speech with great interest and benevolence, as if it concerned someone else, and he maintained this attitude until the very end with perfect naturalness. When the discourse was over, he said in a voice loud enough to be heard, "M. the Duke of Fitz-James really has some talent." And that was all.

Villèle, who had become president of the Council, considered him an enemy from then on, and Talleyrand accepted the challenge. When the minister involved France in military action in Spain to re-establish absolutism in the name of the Holy Alliance and for the advantage of Ferdinand VII, the Prince again appeared in the Luxembourg to combat this intervention. He actually intended to take advantage of the situation in order to create a false legend. "Sixteen years ago today," he began, "when I was summoned by the man who was then ruling the world to give him my opinion about engaging in a struggle with the Spanish people, I had the misfortune to displease him by unveiling the future to him, by revealing the many dangers that would be born as the result of an act of aggression that was no more unjust than it was foolhardy. Disgrace was the fruit of my sincerity. It is a strange destiny that, after such a long lapse of time, leads me to renew these same efforts, give this same counsel, to the legitimate sovereign . . ." With what lofty serenity, with what solemn dignity did he utter these audacious lies in his speech of February 3, 1823!

Doubtless there was more than one man among the peers who knew that Maurice de Talleyrand, far from dissuading Napoleon from intervention in Spain, had urged him on to such a point that he was taken for the chief instigator of the event. But this time no one arose to denounce his imposture, for the good reason that, after speeches by Barante, Daru, and Villèle, the Chamber had voted to close the session, though Talleyrand, Broglie, Dalberg, and Molé were still against it, and the

speeches of these four peers became known to the public only when they appeared in brochures.

The printed speech was enough to make Talleyrand appear not only as the enemy of the rightist ministers, but also as the adversary of the entire royal policy. In his usual fashion, Louis XVIII once again intended to admonish the grand chamberlain so that after subjecting him to a discreet disgrace, he might know a more complete one. He called him to the Tuileries a few days after the debate.

"Are you not planning to return to the country, Prince?"

"No, Sire," Talleyrand answered, "unless Your Majesty goes to Fontainbleau. Then I shall have the honor of accompanying him to fulfill the duties of my position."

"No, that is not what I mean to say. I am asking if you are not going to go back to your estates."

"No, Sire."

"Ah, but how far is it from Paris to Valençay?"

"Sire, I do not know exactly, but it must be almost the same distance as from Paris to Gand."

Opposition to the "elder branch"

Six years after he had put the Bourbons back on the throne, he had already shown such opposition to the royal policies that he had become an enemy of the "elder branch." In fact, he began to ally himself with all those who fought against it. Taking advantage of the fact that Valençay was close to Châteauvieux where Royer-Collard was passing his vacation, he allied himself closely with the leader of the *doctrinaires,* who had joined the opposition because of Villèle's policies, but such a fact does not prove that his own opposition was already ripening into active hostility. These *doctrinaires* still offered a strictly constitutional opposition, and François Guizot himself would have been surprised if anyone had told him that within six years the struggle would end in the downfall of the throne. But Talleyrand perhaps would have been less surprised. He was far-sighted and joined the party of men who were more deeply involved than Royer-Collard or François Guizot in the struggle against the "elder branch." His house on the Rue Saint-Florentin soon became the meeting place for all those, such as Foy, Sebastiani, Soult, and Girardin, who were already thinking of Louis-Philippe, Duke d'Orléans. Talleyrand himself increased the cordiality of his relations with the Orléans family.

Although Louis XVIII had personally foiled him by his unmistakable

hostility and wounded him by his jibes, he probably never lost hope of winning him back. It was he who had made the former Count de Provence king, or at least he thought so, and though he was above ordinary weakness, he probably did not escape from the law which makes you love those whom you have obliged, rather than those to whom you are obliged. But the Count d'Artois and his friends remained so hostile that the Prince now had everything to fear about the accession to the throne of the future Charles X. Louis XVIII died on September 16, 1824.

He foresaw no good for the country and especially for himself in the new reign. He had wounded the Count d'Artois and lost his friendship forever at Cambrai on June 28, 1815, and since then he had aroused the hatred of his followers, if not of the charming Charles himself, who was still frivolous, amiable, and seemingly incapable of hatred. The King let his coterie govern—to the disadvantage of France, Talleyrand would have said—and he left Polignac in charge while he went hunting, for he was a true Bourbon and delighted in sport. "What do you have to say about the King's hunts?" wrote the grand chamberlain to Royer-Collard. "In one, he shot down 1,793 pieces of game, which no King of France had ever done before. What progress in civilization!" He no longer had any hope for these Bourbons: from this Charles X, ruled by friends who were all his enemies; the Dauphin, the Duke d'Angoulême, whose wife, the daughter of Louis XVI, had never given the ex-bishop of Autun anything but an icy welcome; the grandson, the Duke de Bordeaux, who was brought up in horror of everything that had been done by the Revolution. But he felt that he was discredited with all parties, as well as with that in power. He certainly was with the royalists of every variety. A noble foreigner, Count Rudolph Apponyi, saw him at the setting of the first stone of the Expiatory Chapel on May 3, 1826, and wrote the next day, "He remained isolated all through the ceremony, as if he had the mange. He knew how to keep his honors, his positions, his rank at the Court, but he has lost respect. Even those who bow before him despise him."

Maubreuil's slap

At the end of another ceremony at Saint-Denis in 1827, having just taken the Duchess d'Angoulême to her carriage, Talleyrand suddenly came face to face with a man who, without saying a word, hurled himself upon him and slapped him. The weak old man staggered, slipped, and fell. The aggressor then gave him a kick. He was the notorious Marquis de Maubreuil, a strange adventurer who had been involved in many

intrigues under the Empire, thanks to Talleyrand himself, and who, on the day the allies entered Paris, had followed them in with his cross of the Legion of Honor attached to his horse's tail by way of an insult. A few days later, at the head of a band of brigands, he attacked the carriage of Catherine, Queen of Westphalia, on the road from Fontainbleau to Sens, and made off with her diamonds which were worth several millions. When he was arrested for this assault, he said that he was only carrying out a mission with which Talleyrand had entrusted him, adding, moreover, that he had fallen back upon the Emperor's sister-in-law only because he could not carry off the Emperor. The President of the Provisory Government had, in effect, told him to assassinate Napoleon, which he had refused to do. This was probably all false. Maubreuil was condemned in 1818 to five years in prison for the theft of the diamonds, without Talleyrand's doing anything to save him, despite his solicitations. Maubreuil declared that Talleyrand had wanted to put a troublesome accomplice behind bars. When he was questioned by the police after the goings-on at Saint-Denis, he made the same accusations and said that he wanted to avenge all those whom Talleyrand had betrayed and sold out.

Talleyrand was carried back home and took to his bed. During the days that followed he had brought to him the lists of "friends" who had come to ask about him, but he paid less attention to those who had come than to those who had stayed away, who were too numerous to suit him. When he did not find the name of Delaveau, the Prefect of Police and a great "Ultra," he said laughingly to Dorothy de Dino, "Delaveau shows very little curiosity for a Prefect of Police." When he was received by Charles X after a rather speedy recovery, the ever affable King spoke with some emotion of this blow which had been struck against an old man. Talleyrand exclaimed in his loudest voice, "Sire, that was nothing but a blow of the fist." Thus he saved face, for could he, such a great gentleman, admit that he had received a slap in the face without returning it? Maubreuil was brought before the Chamber of Correction for having struck the "blow." The Prince, however, refused to bring charges, but his enemies did not speak of his magnanimity but of his prudence, for he wished to avoid a dispute. A biting remark was spread abroad: "We have had M. de Lamennais' book on *Indifference in Religious Matters*. Now we are awaiting M. de Talleyrand's on *Indifference in the Matter of Slaps*."

The pitiless raillery of his many enemies and its reception by the public hurt the Prince more than the "blow of the fist." Maubreuil renewed his accusations and added that he had only slapped him because he had

not had time to "spit in the face" of this "vile blackguard." Talleyrand shrugged his shoulders at the statements of this "madman," but he was profoundly embarrassed by public opinion. Was it true that he was "mangy"? He attributed these odious comments to the hatred of the party in power, and the commiseration of Charles X had exasperated him more than it had touched him. At any rate, he was sure that everyone thought all was over with him, as if he were dead and buried. When Chateaubriand described "this death's head," he emphasized the atrocious expression of the lips, "Since he had met with a great deal of contempt, he was impregnated with it, and he had put it in the downturned corners of his mouth." A death's head! A corpse! Everyone would have been astonished at the idea that he could return to public life in fine form. This is what happened, however, though it took a new revolution to accomplish it. Talleyrand saw it coming. He was already determined to benefit by it and was preparing the means to do so.

36

TALLEYRAND PREPARES A REVOLUTION

Adolphe Thiers

WHEN THE Prince was preparing to speak against the expedition to Spain in 1823, he wanted to be well informed. Manuel, a deputy who had intervened in the disputes at the Palais-Bourbon in an even more resounding fashion and had thus been expelled, had informed himself about Spain through one of his young compatriots of the Bouches-du-Rhône, Adolphe Thiers, a twenty-six-year-old journalist who had recently made his debut in the *Constitutional,* the great left-wing newspaper. This young man from Marseilles had just made a trip through the north of Spain, and the Prince questioned him with profit. He asked Manuel to acquaint him with the young man. The deputy from Aix took him to the house of Lafitte, the banker, one of the future creators of the revolution of 1830, who often gathered together the leaders of the extreme left, such as Lafayette, Odilon Barrot, Béranger, Foy, and Manuel himself.

The introduction of Adolphe Thiers to the Prince de Talleyrand is a date in history. Talleyrand, who had grown old in great affairs of state, made this "gamin" in whom he saw the "sacred spark" into the statesman of future governments, and by forming the President of the Third Republic, he himself lived after a fashion forty-five years more in the history of France. For the moment, he simply planned to make the fellow a useful agent of destruction.

Dorothy de Dino bought the Château de Rochecotte in Touraine a short time later. She invited her friends there, and Talleyrand came from Valençay to make contacts with those whom he did not yet intend to ask to his own château. At the Prince's request, she invited Adolph Thiers. Thiers was at ease everywhere. Conceited but not vain, this little bourgeois won the Duchess with his inexhaustible verve and his already astonishing cultivation, which was the result of hard work. Talleyrand was interested in him. "It is for your wit that M. de Talleyrand has his most amiable smile, and I, my most avid attention," the

Duchess wrote to him after one of his visits to Rochecotte. Talleyrand showered him with advice, and gave him lessons, pointed out corrections to be made in his style and in his speech, put him on his guard against dangerous errors, but encouraged valuable tendencies, for he prized the energy and the "sacred spark" of this young man, and planned to make use of them.

Without seeming to have anything to do with public affairs, Talleyrand traveled each year from the Rue Saint-Florentin to Valençay, from Valençay to Bourbon-l'Archambault, and thence to Paris, pretending to be greatly disillusioned, sometimes jokingly, or affected "sadness" because of "the errors of the throne." He was still the grand chamberlain and continued to appear at the Tuileries, to play whist with the princes, even with the King himself, who, even though he still did not like him, continued to enjoy the elegant and refined manners of this very old friend from Versailles. Such a relationship enabled Talleyrand to feel the pulse of the dying man, as he had with Barras in 1799, and again in the Tuileries in 1814 and 1815. It also allowed him comparative familiarity, which often became impertinence. Irritated by the violent campaign conducted by the opposition at the close of 1829, Charles exclaimed one evening, "A King who is threatened has no choice but the throne or the scaffold." Talleyrand, half smiling as he recalled March 20, said gently, "Sire, Your Majesty forgets the post-chaise." He was already preparing the route for the post-chaise.

Talleyrand prepares a revolution

"One could not dissimulate the fact that we were heading towards an abyss," wrote Talleyrand. "From the moment that legitimacy itself betrayed its principles by breaking its oaths, it became necessary to seek the salvation of France at random and, if possible, to save at least the monarchic principle, independent of legitimacy, in the great tempest which the latter had called forth." The tone in which the old man wrote out his recollections is always admirable. A tissue of intrigues succeeded, and all is cloaked in phrases worthy of a *Discourse on Universal History*. The idea, he wrote, of giving the throne to the younger branch was already in the air. As early as 1828, he had determined to encourage this idea.

At that time he had tightened his bonds with the Palais Royal, the residence of the Duke d'Orléans, which had been rather loose. Since he had known Philippe Egalité long ago and had little liking for his attitude, which was both odious and absurd, he had never been one of what was called the "Orléans faction" in 1793, 1799, and 1814. Doubt-

less he had for a moment suggested to Mme de Coigny in 1813 the name of Louise-Philippe, the son of the "red prince," the Bourbon regicide, but that was to frighten the other Bourbons and to incline them to make peace with him. Now he returned to "the usurper of a good family," who, when the legitimate King was overthrown, would save the land of the Republic. It was important to have sources of information near the Duke d'Orléans. As usual, Talleyrand looked for a woman. "What can you do with a man who has neither mistress nor confessor?" a minister said of Louis-Philippe one day. Talleyrand knew that the Duke was a good husband and had no mistress, and that his excellent wife, Marie-Amélie, had only a mediocre influence over him in politics. But there was his sister, the terrible, ambitious Mme Adélaïde, who knew how to make Louis-Philippe pay attention to her. The former minister counted on making his way through her. He saw her a great deal in 1828, 1829, and 1830, and became her familiar and adviser. It was through her that he kept himself constantly in the favor of Louis-Philippe after he became King in 1830; his correspondence with the Princess proves it. A cordial, intimate relationship was established between the old statesman and the enterprising Princess. Mme de Dino, of course, lent herself to the plan and was most complaisant and agreeable with Adélaïde.

The pretty Duchess de Dino had really become the chief agent. She received those whom Talleyrand did not wish to see too openly, such as journalists and deputies of the left. The uncle would drop in during the evening and they would chat. Adolphe Thiers was more and more the great favorite. Determined to overthrow everything, he no longer wrote simple accounts and articles, but "leaders" in the *Constitutional* and the *Globe*. But both of these papers were comparatively moderate by tradition. When the time came for the attack, there had to be a new journal, a fighting journal. In December, 1829, Thiers took Armand Carrel, a violent young militant, Mignet, and some others to Rochecotte, where Mme de Dino lived. The program for the new paper, which was called the *National,* was drawn up at the home of Talleyrand's niece. There is no doubt that the Prince furnished the funds and issued directives through his niece. The new paper opened fire on January 3, 1830. Prince de Polignac, who had been the King's *alter ego* for such a long time, had become his prime minister. Charles X suddenly discovered that it was he whom the *National* was attacking through Polignac. The struggle became general. It was clear from this time on that for most of the assailants it would end only with the downfall of the "elder branch."

The famous Ordinances appeared on July 26, and Thiers, by signing the journalists' protest in the offices of the *National,* fired the first shot of the revolution. Three days later, the "elder branch" was laid low.

The July days

At five o'clock on the afternoon of July 28, Talleyrand, who had been following the movements of the crowds from his window, learned of the invasion of the City Hall. "A few minutes more," he said, looking at his watch, "and Charles X will no longer be King of France." A little crowd filled the Prince's salon and study, as on March 31, 1814, but they were not the same people. Talleyrand was no longer sheltering kings, but was again overthrowing them, and within the very walls where the word "legitimacy" had resounded for the first time, "revolution" was now the cry.

It was Thiers, however, who agitated and acted during these days, but when he went to Neuilly, where the Orléans family was passing the summer, and when he did not find Louis-Philippe and asked the princesses to influence him to be daring, the little man was the bearer of the thoughts of the old Prince—as when he offered the Duke d'Orléans candidacy for the throne in Paris.

Talleyrand himself sent an urgent message to Adélaïde on the afternoon of the twenty-ninth: Louis-Philippe had to come to Paris, where, while waiting for something better, he would be made lieutenant-general. "Ah, this good Prince!" exclaimed Adélaïde. "I was sure that he was not forgetting about us." The Duke d'Orléans answered the appeal. Charles X had abdicated and was getting ready to leave Saint-Cloud to go into exile. The hour of the "post-chaise" had sounded. "It is not I who abandoned the King," Talleyrand could say, "It is the King who abandoned us."

The deputies came to ask the lieutenant-general to accept the crown on the thirty-first. Before answering, Louis-Philippe dispatched General Sebastiani to the Rue Saint-Florentin. "Let him accept," the Prince exclaimed at once. When he returned to the Palais-Royal after his famous visit to the City Hall, Louis-Philippe found Talleyrand among the first who had come to greet him.

Louis-Philippe was greeted as King by the Chamber on August 9. But Talleyrand had already written on the eighth, "Now we are established. The fourth race begins!" Another sovereign to whom he could say, as had his ancestor, Adelbert de Périgord, to Hugh Capet, "Who made you king?"

37

THE EMBASSY TO LONDON

The foreign situation compromised

THE PRINCE could not conceal from himself the fact that the new throne was rather shaky in the whirlwind which was agitating Paris so wildly. The debauch of "democracy" and even of demagogy which followed the July days must have been remarkably disheartening for him and even alarming at times. His counsels were wise and firm, but he was less preoccupied with the domestic situation, than with the terrible repercussions the new revolution had upon France's relations with Europe. The event could ruin the entire structure which he had done so much to build in 1814 and 1815.

When the uprising of July 27 began, *The Journal of Debates* wrote, "A revolution would again put France in the situation in which she found herself during the Hundred Days." In fact, the July days not only laid low Charles X, but, like all revolutions, seriously endangered the country's interests beyond her frontiers.

France's situation had improved year by year since 1815, and, despite Talleyrand's criticisms of his successors, had improved to the point of becoming good. Since her entrance into the Holy Alliance had disarmed the "Northern Courts," she had room for action again. She used her return to the concert of European powers to create discord bit by bit, thus following the same policy which Talleyrand himself had practiced so brilliantly at Vienna. She had freed herself from all tutelage; she had successfully attacked Metternich's policy in the affair of Greece in which she had involved Russia and England against the will of the German courts; then had stood up against England when the Algiers expedition was decided upon and had carried it out, despite protests and threats from London. The Prince de Polignac, who had been so awkward in domestic affairs, was, on the contrary, very skillful in his handling of Europe. He had deliberately sought the support of Russia, who had been helped by French policy in the Balkans, against the hostility of England, and he was beginning to form a solid alliance with Russia when the July revolution broke it off.

Everyone, especially those who had brought it about, thought this revolution a triumph of the "patriots" over the Holy Alliance. Certain leaders of the movement did not conceal their feelings in the matter; the resurrection of the tricolor was to be the signal for a new battle of "the people against the thrones," and the beginning of a great revenge for France, the end of the "odious treaties of 1815."

Europe had no need of warning. She herself interpreted the events at Paris as the beginning of a crusade against the Holy Alliance which would rebound against France, even if she had released it. The continental powers were again forming against the revolution, against France herself.

The mad provocations from Paris strengthened the new coalition which was being formed. Most of the leaders of the revolution called the oppressed peoples to liberty and promised to come to their aid.

The new sovereign played his role well under the circumstances. Louis-Philippe was naturally wise, perspicacious, and clearsighted, and he was also the determined champion of peace. But how could he avoid a new coalition at the moment and have his new government take its place among the European nations? He thought of Talleyrand at once.

Did he think of making him his Minister of Foreign Affairs? The proposal may have been made, since Talleyrand himself exclaimed, "It's not at Paris, it's at London that I am needed."

London, the sore spot

If England, simply by an unfavorable attitude towards the new government, favored the coalition, France was heading for a catastrophe. The British cabinet had received the news from Paris with disquieting coldness. The Tories, who were in power, had never allied their country with the Holy Alliance, but they were too conservative to be indifferent to the success of a revolution which was a triumph for their adversaries, the Whigs. The Duke of Wellington, who was at the head of the government, had done at least as much as the former leaders of the coalition to restore the Bourbons in 1814 and 1815, and he could not see the downfall of the elder branch without regrets. He had a strong grudge against Polignac for having resisted his government in the Algiers affair, and for having headed France towards an alliance with Russia, which was directed against England even more than against Austria. These events had awakened the bitterest suspicions in the conqueror of Waterloo and in his government. As the price of her support of Russia in the Balkans, France had counted on the friendship of the Tsar to help her achieve her famous "natural boundaries,"

something which England feared above all else. Since the Belgians seemed about to rise against the King of Holland, there was some suspicion in London that the Parisian cabinet might take advantage of the situation to retake part or all of the territory which France had had to give up in 1814, and the question of Anvers, England's eternal nightmare, would be raised again. Polignac's downfall, in which English machinations in France were involved, would have satisfied the Duke of Wellington, but the fall of the old Bourbons exceeded his desires and upset his plans. While the continental powers were hesitating about recognizing the new King, Tsar Nicholas I, whose absolutist policy and projected alliance were both affected by the disappearance of Charles X, declared that he would not resign himself to it. The British cabinet had granted recognition only with remarkable asperity.

Talleyrand, however, thought this was enough to conceive the hope of reaching an understanding, which he considered so necessary that he would sacrifice everything to it, if need be. It was the only chance to avoid the formation of a new coalition and war. Louis-Philippe agreed with the idea, and, having explained matters to the Prince, immediately proposed him to the Council as envoy to England. He sent for Talleyrand and offered him the English embassy. Talleyrand was tempted, but he wanted the great role of dealing with Europe, and, since Molé was the official minister, he wanted to direct all French foreign policy from London. Louis-Philippe gave in to him, and Molé himself agreed to give him everything. "The King insists," he said to the Prince, "he demands more than I can repeat to you." The Prince accepted. "He will cast the die," said the delighted King, and in recognition of his services, he restored his income of 100,000 francs as grand chamberlain, even though the position had been abolished. This was something to which Talleyrand could not be indifferent.

The effects of prestige

This simple acceptance was in itself a great service. Though he was decried by part of French public opinion, Talleyrand still had such credit with the courts and chancelleries that the mere announcement of his nomination was enough to modify Europe's hostile inclinations. Metternich was astonished and disconcerted by it. During the July days, Talleyrand, as a far-sighted man, had occasionally sent an emissary to the Austrian chancellor to reassure him. "The two of us together," he wrote, "will maintain peace against the anarchists of France and against foreign disturbers." "You will tell him from me," he had said to his envoy, "that I shall personally be his guarantee for the pacific in-

tentions of the Duke d'Orléans and of the new monarchy which is being prepared." How could a power which such a *grand seigneur* consented to serve be treated as vulgar and revolutionary, or fragile, when this foresighted man was devoting himself to it, or as creating revolts when the man who had made treaties at Vienna was representing it? His prestige even had effects in Petersburg, "prestige" in the original sense of the word, a "miraculous effect." Though he had sworn not to recognize Louis-Philippe, Nicholas I did so, though in most ungracious terms, twenty-four hours after the surprising news in the *Monitor*. "Since M. de Talleyrand is attaching himself to the new government," said the Tsar jeeringly, "it ought to have some chance of lasting." Wellington welcomed the coming of this former "ally" of 1815. While he was on his guard against this "prestige," he planned to give him a great welcome. The guard of honor which Talleyrand found when he disembarked at Dover was, for a special reason, commanded by the prime minister's eldest son, the young Wellesley. The day after his nomination, Talleyrand had been received as if he were a Messiah by Lord Grenville, ambassador in Paris, who was delighted to find such a famous man between him and the "government of the streets." Feeling was the same everywhere. "Thanks to you, Sire," Talleyrand wrote to Louis-Philippe three years later, "I obtained the rights of European citizenship for the July revolution." His nomination was already forcing open the gates of the European city.

War and peace

He left Paris on September 22. Thus, by an incredible turn of fate, after thirty-eight years he was again on the way to England to which a revolutionary ministry had sent him in 1792 on a similar mission: to secure England from the solicitations of Europe, which was forming a coalition against France; to try to obtain the neutrality of the British cabinet despite the prime minister's hostility; and to try for an *entente,* if possible, perhaps even an alliance, which would probably avoid a general war. He had not succeeded in 1792. Despite his high birth and his rapid rise in politics, he was then an unimportant person whose short past was to his disadvantage.

How different things were in 1830! Since an equally revolutionary government had given him the mission of saving the country from new perils, which were very similar, he felt that this time he would succeed because now he had consummate experience and great authority with which to serve France, something on which he could pride himself greatly. He was now Prince de Talleyrand. This mission would be his revenge for the insults which he had recently suffered.

Let us be just. These personal thoughts could move him; they were not enough to content him. After thirty-eight years, he was about to realize the triumph of an idea which he had cherished more than any other, and which alone gave his life a persevering unity. "I am going back there (London)," he wrote, "filled with hope, especially with the desire to establish at last that alliance between France and England which I have always considered the strongest guarantee of the happiness of the two nations and of the peace of the world." The author of the celebrated *Memoirs* is neither lying nor exaggerating here. It was clear that the "peace of the world" depended upon the effect of his mission. The July revolution had alarmed the governments, but it was going to make the people uprise. It was to have repercussions in Belgium, Poland, and Italy, especially. The Courts, almost all of which were menaced, were tending to form a bloc, and, since Paris seemed to be the hearth on which the fire was being nourished, France would again be treated as the disturber of the world. England feared this world disturbance no less than the Holy Alliance, but she especially feared that France might derive advantage from this disturbance, and that, if the masses again turned towards her, she would be tempted to misuse the situation, to aggrandize herself, and to again push back the frontiers which England had done so much to establish firmly in 1814 and 1815. Since these fears seemed justified, England, still hesitating in September, 1830, would no longer hesitate to join the "powers" to put out the fire again. Under such conditions, Talleyrand had peace or war in his hands, on condition that he would be allowed to act freely, that he would be authorized to negotiate with all Europe from London. Thus he would re-establish France's position among the nations, as he had done at Vienna, when she was about to be banished. Talleyrand was really an ambassador extraordinary, and he intended to control the ambassador himself, whether he was Molé or Sebastiani, more than he would be controlled by him.

But he had his own way of doing things. It consisted of getting his own way, rather than flattering people. Thus he had acted at Vienna in 1814, where, it will be recalled, he, a man of the world, had been almost rude at the beginning. He would have his way at London by being haughty. As he had first talked about the principle of legitimacy at Vienna, at London he began by talking about another principle, the principle of liberty, the most sacred of liberties, that of a nation to give itself the government which suits it. He did not excuse the revolution; on the contrary, he spoke in its name, but, by making himself feared, the later moderation of his policy and the concessions he made were all the more appreciated.

His installation in London

He entered London with great pomp. The crowds, which had been fearing war for two months and which hoped that he was bringing peace, filled the streets through which he passed and cheered him with the traditional "hurrahs." An ovation was something which this formal, icy *grand seigneur,* who had always seemed to disdain popularity, had never known in his life. But he put on another face at London. People saw with surprise that the old man knew how to smile at a crowd, and since this smile was so rare it flattered the masses as it did the powerful. He was dressed as usual in an old-fashioned way, his throat muffled in an enormous white muslin cravat, his body clad in an ample, dark-colored coat, his weak legs in black breeches and white stockings, his deformed feet in silver-buckled shoes, but he was also adorned with the tricolor, and wore an enormous cockade, "six inches square," on his hat and a knot of ribbons in the revolutionary colors in place of his badge of diamonds. Young Count d'Haussonville saw him arriving at the embassy in this outfit, which was more than a manifestation; it was an affirmation. He brought with him three young *sans-culottes* "to give himself an air of republicanism," as one newspaper wrote. But that evening when he attended a dinner which Wellington, who had returned from the country for the express purpose, was giving in his honor, Talleyrand was again the *grand seigneur,* at ease in his embroidered coat with the ribbons and badges of his orders and without the smallest tricolor cockade. But at the beginning of their first conversation the next day, when Wellington spoke of "unfortunate July revolution," Talleyrand took up the remark as quickly as he had all "unseemly" statements at Vienna.

"The revolution," he said, "is not a misfortune for France, since she has been removed from the dangerous situation in which the preceding system of government placed her, nor for the other States of Europe with which we want to remain on good terms." Wellington smiled and took back his remark.

In the days that followed he took care of all impertinences to Louis-Philippe in the same fashion. He found a war-like atmosphere at the Russian embassy. Prince Lieven, representative of Nicholas I, was ruled by the Princess, a great European lady who was much opposed to the July monarchy. When the King of England asked her how far Talleyrand could be trusted, she answered, "I think that a man who has spent seventy-five years in intrigue will not forget his trade in the seventy-sixth."

To Talleyrand himself she said, "No matter what is said or done, what has just happened in France is an outrageous usurpation."

"You are right, Madame," the Prince snapped back, "only what is regrettable is that it did not take place sixteen years sooner, as Emperor Alexander, your master, desired and wished."

During an audience which King William IV had granted him for the delivery of letters, he went even further, if the letter he wrote to Mme Adélaïde is to be believed. By greeting him as "the illustrious descendant of the House of Brunswick," he had intended, he said, to remind the sovereign that his dynasty was also the result of a revolution, that of 1688, which, at the expense of the legitimate Stuarts, had enthroned princes whose origin should inspire them with discretion.

Hanover Square

He also undertook to be charming and dazzling. As at Vienna, he intended to live in a grand style and to win over the gentry. This ambassador of the "red caps" again clicked his "red heels." Of course, he had brought Dorothy de Dino along. During the fifteen years of her "reign," the Duchess, a brilliant hostess ever since her début at Vienna, had reached perfection in her "trade." The luxurious drawing room on Hanover Square was thrown open, and Talleyrand's famous table had no competition. The hospitality was so extensive that soon Dorothy was dismayed. "Our dinners are a success," she wrote, "they are making history in London gastronomy, but it's ruinous." Talleyrand himself was frightened by the expense, but he intended to keep them up, since he was one of those who thinks that a chef is more precious to an ambassador than a good secretary. He knew how to provide for his household. Probably he no longer charged millions for the services he rendered and for those he did not render, but this incorrigible gambler had never lost the habit of playing the stockmarket, and his relations with the English ministers enabled him to make excellent profits, although one day he lost 800,000 francs, which leads one to believe that he gained as much on other days. Supported by these resources and by his always "considerable" income, the Prince kept up his entertainments at the embassy. All London society flocked to his house, and before the year was out, the Hanover Square receptions were the great attraction. "Everyone here is at his feet," wrote a London newspaper in 1834. "All the nobility of England eagerly seek his society. The diplomats of every country bow before him." When Merimée left one of these famous dinners in 1832, he exclaimed, "Everywhere he goes, he forms a court and makes the law."

38

TALLEYRAND'S LAST VICTORY: THE BELGIAN AFFAIR

The Brussels revolution

AS SOON as he arrived, he had to face a matter that was most serious and, for the representative of France, most delicate. It was extremely important in the history of his embassy. "If we succeed," he wrote at the end of 1830, "we shall recall with pleasure the scare that Belgium gave us."

Brussels, and soon all Belgium, had revolted against the King of Holland on August 25, 1830. The Kingdom of the Netherlands, the artificial creation of the treaties of 1815, was breaking up. It was feared that the countries which vouched for these treaties would intervene to help suppress the insurrection. The chancelleries of the Holy Alliance had had this idea at once and it was highly probable that England would join the continental powers to force Belgium to abide by the law. The Kingdom of the Netherlands was, as a matter of fact, the creation of England. In 1814 England had planned to set up a fortified state to the northeast of France, so that a state, like Prussia on the Rhine, could hem France in and forever destroy her hope of getting back Anvers. Russia and Austria could give only moral support to Prussia, who, as a neighbor, had the task of restoring the House of Orange to full power.

Revolutionary France found itself in a most difficult situation. Since its own revolution was hardly over, the country was in a passion about the Brussels revolution, which was called the daughter of the Parisian revolution. "The men of the movement," as the partisans of revolutionary action were known, demanded nothing less than armed intervention on behalf of the Belgians. This would confirm the solidarity of revolutionary France with all peoples who were overthrowing their oppressors. Nothing could have been more alarming than this attitude to the chancelleries of the Holy Alliance, which were already

upset by the July days. France's evident interest in taking Belgium away from the King of the Netherlands aroused even more suspicion and fear—in England especially.

Talleyrand immediately saw the danger clearly. This affair could compromise all his plans for an accord with England. First he asked Louis-Philippe to oppose energetically any plan for French intervention in Belgium, and having with some trouble persuaded the ministry to resist the Parisian "fanatics" on this point, he was then able to proclaim a principle to Europe, as was his habit. This time it was the principle of non-intervention. But there was already a party, even at Brussels itself, which favored going over to France, either by asking for union with her, or by electing one of the sons of Louis-Philippe as king.

This hypothesis alone was enough to make Wellington declare his opposition to the Brussels revolution. But if he yielded to his wish, would he not help to throw the Belgians into the arms of France, an event which he feared more than anything else? Within a few days, the Belgians had driven the Dutch troops out of all their towns, with the exception of Anvers. If Prussia did not support the King of Holland's military action, he probably would not succeed in reconquering the country, which was now completely and ardently determined to repel any offensive by the expelled "oppressor."

Non-intervention

Talleyrand had immediately perceived the fears of the English prime minister and his nation. Curiously enough the Belgian revolution, which had first seemed a terrible blow, now became a means of reaching the accord which he was seeking.

With his government's promise to resist all offers and solicitations from Brussels, Talleyrand lost no time in calming Wellington's fears by very straightforward statements. If Europe would not intervene in favor of the King of the Netherlands, France would abstain forever from any attempt to take Belgium, directly or indirectly. Wellington was reassured, and, grateful for Talleyrand's furnishing him with a principle, he, too, spoke in favor of non-intervention, which he defended against the other powers.

This was a great change from the ideas which had prevailed since 1815. The basis, the goal, the very *raison d'être* of the Holy Alliance was the principle of intervention, which, if it were given up, would be a blow from which the Alliance would not recover. It was fortunate that the powers were then sufficiently divided so that an immediate accord was

impossible. Austria could not forgive Russia for her agreement with France and England about the emancipation of Greece, which, as far as she was concerned, had already had a revolution. Metternich, moreover, had a very complex attitude towards the Belgians. He was basically sympathetic to these former subjects of the House of Austria, who were Catholics that had come under the government of a Protestant nation against which they were revolting. Austria certainly had no hope of getting them back, but if the Holy Alliance were to decide to return them to the House of Orange, the task had to be given to Prussia. If the King of the Netherlands were re-established in Brussels and if the troops of Frederick-William III occupied the country, would not Prussia have a great increase in power? Austria had watched with suspicion as the Hohenzollerns grew so great in Germany that they became the rivals of the Hapsburgs for supremacy in the Confederation. The King of Prussia himself felt some hesitation about mobilizing his army simply for the defense of principles, since he knew well that England and Austria would not let him reward himself for his trouble by any annexations at the expense of the Netherlands. Frederick-William III was an old man; he had known so many ups and downs in his life that he was worn out. He longed for peace. If the Holy Alliance ordered him to suppress the Belgian "revolt," he would do so, but if the least difficulty were caused by one of the powers, he would not.

Now that he was comparatively assured of Wellington's support, Talleyrand did not intend to let the question remain in suspense, nor to let Europe declare itself, for he intended to handle all Europe from London. He was helped by a fortunate circumstance which he knew how to exploit. An international conference to settle the affairs of Greece had been going on in London for a year; it was composed of representatives of the five great powers. Wellington proposed that this conference should deal with the affairs of Belgium and regulate them. The French cabinet was not well disposed towards the idea. The conference should at least take place in Paris so that certain influences could be avoided. Talleyrand, on the contrary, thought it advantageous for this action to take place at once, and at London, where he had freedom of action. Paying no heed to the ideas of his minister, Count Molé, he agreed completely with Wellington's proposal.

An independent ambassador

Talleyrand was from the start very free and easy with his government, and especially with his minister. He was not at all inclined to be considered a subordinate, and, knowing that for London and for Europe he

was "the pledge rather than the representative of his country," as Thureau Dangin puts it, he made this rather evident. He intended to be left free. "I do not talk about it in Paris," he wrote in regard to a certain matter, "because I would be given instructions and I want to act without having any." This was his attitude towards all matters in which he was concerned. Keeping his confidences for Mme Adélaïde, who transmitted them to the King, he had only a "mocking correspondence" with Count Molé and told him nothing which could be enlightening to the government's general policy. Molé complained bitterly to Louis-Philippe. "M. de Talleyrand has left here," he wrote, "determined to correspond directly with the King and to send letters only to the Foreign Office . . . Peace or war will be decided at London without me, if M. de Talleyrand conducts the negotiations." The minister was so angry that he offered his resignation, but the King refused it, and warned the ambassador. On the pretext of explaining matters frankly, Talleyrand adopted a high-handed manner with Molé. "You will find that I tell everything," he wrote to him, "except what I think has no importance whatsoever. This is what I did with the Emperor and with Louis XVIII." The minister was crushed by the weight of such great memories. Molé replied in a most courteous fashion, and Sebastiani, his successor, bowed even more deeply to the Prince's "whims."

A fine piece of diplomacy

He managed things well. Despite endless vicissitudes, the Belgian affair was being settled. Since Wellington had adopted the principle of non-intervention, partly to restrain France, Talleyrand left it up to him to make the representatives of the Holy Alliance accept it. His first success was that these representatives agreed to have the matter handled in the Conference at London. This was an implicit renunciation of war. The King of Prussia used it as a pretext to ignore the appeals of the King of the Netherlands. He said that since England was not willing to do anything, he "would not undertake singlehanded a war the interests of which were much more those of England than of his own States." Metternich, who had been hesitating about condemning Belgium, blamed the retreat of the Holy Alliance upon "Prussia's lack of moral energy" and Wellington's "treachery." It was clear that Talleyrand's master-stroke had averted the danger which threatened France from Belgium in the summer of 1830. He decided to link his action with that of England, so that she would gradually grow so used to the idea of an *entente cordiale* that it might be changed into a quasi-alliance. The Tory cabinet, formerly considered so unfavorable to

such an *entente cordiale,* fell, and the Whig cabinet, which came into power on November 15, seemed to increase the chances of an alliance. Everything would have turned out wonderfully if the Foreign Office had not been put in charge of Palmerston, who of all Englishmen was always the most distrustful of France and the most determined to paralyze her. He only wanted to put an end to the Belgian crisis by recognizing the new state which was being formed, but, even more than Wellington or Aberdeen, his predecessor in the Foreign Office, he stubbornly considered this crisis nothing more than a machination by France, who was not to be allowed to gain anything by it, "not even a cabbage patch." He thought Talleyrand was a stupid blockhead who said nothing worthwhile, and if the Prince made endless protestations of the complete disinterestedness of France and Louis-Philippe, Palmerston, who had an eternal hatred for France, saw, as he wrote on April 22, 1832, "the cloven foot in a new disguise."

The conference, however, was struggling with the most serious difficulties. Should the new state be allowed to choose a king freely and independently? There was already a rumor that most of the Belgian leaders wanted the Duke de Nemours, Louis-Philippe's second son. This idea alone made Palmerston's hair stand on end. If all of Belgium were closely attached to France, it would be something much more than a cabbage patch. Palmerston was already more hostile than his Tory predecessor to the establishment of a Belgian state. Did Talleyrand want to frighten him? Suddenly he brought a plan which, by terrifying the Englishman, might make him more receptive. Why not, in the manner in which the Congress of Vienna distributed territories, install the King of Saxony in Brussels? Saxony would go to Prussia, though it had been refused to her in 1815, but Prussia would cede the left bank of the Rhine to France. Talleyrand informed the new French minister, Lafitte, of this fine idea. Talleyrand also knew how to flatter his leader, the man of the "movement," the man who had been done a wrong when Prussia was established on the Rhine. He built up a legend. He had suffered more than anyone, he insinuated, by having to give up the natural boundaries, and it had been done despite all his efforts. The time had come, he said, when his real policy would be revealed, as history would show. This was pure fantasy or pure strategy. Metternich was even less willing in 1830 than in 1815 to let the Prussians into Dresden and the French into Cologne, and Palmerston would ten times sooner have thrown England into Metternich's arms than have allowed all the Rhineland to return to France.

. . . . .

Of course, Talleyrand did not insist in the face of such hostility. He had made his threat and let it go at that. Palmerston realized that it would be worthwhile to come to an understanding with France, if only for the sake of restraining her. The English cabinet again seemed favorable to the establishment of an independent Belgian state. The Conference followed. When it met on November 4, Belgium and Holland were invited to suspend hostilities and the boundaries of the future state were prejudiced, since the line of demarcation between the two armies was the boundary of France and Holland in 1814.

Belgian Independence

The Belgians were encouraged and went ahead. The Congress of Brussels proclaimed independence on November 10, adopted a constitutional monarchy as the form of government, and announced the fall of the Orange-Nassau dynasty. The London Conference announced the dissolution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on December 20, and on January 10, 1831, established the "bases of separation." This was the first blow struck against the treaties of 1815 by the European *entente* itself. Talleyrand had reached his goal. Without a single sword being drawn, he gave this first great satisfaction to the "men of July," who, hoping to destroy the famous edifice of Vienna, saw a whole wall falling beneath the fine hand of the man who had negotiated these same "odious" treaties. He wanted Belgium to be declared neutral, so that the new state would be a better protection of the French northeastern frontier than the strongest fortifications—an illusion which was twice shattered in the future but which was justifiable in 1831. Having fought "like a dragon," as Palmerston said, to have all of Luxembourg given to Belgium and having failed, he gave up his efforts in return for the guarantee of perpetual neutrality by the five powers.

Talleyrand had to make certain necessary sacrifices to attain these ends. The greatest was Poland, which had revolted, too. Filled with this sudden zeal against the work of the Congress of Vienna in which he had had such a part, Talleyrand, who had once been so hostile to the partition of Poland, then so unfavorable to all plans for her resurrection ever since his stay in Warsaw in 1807, and, finally, at Vienna so agreeable to the maintenance of the partition, thought that insurgent Poland could be taken away from the government of the Tsars with the help of Prussia and England. "There is no one today," he wrote on December 31, 1830, "who does not realize that the kingdom of Poland, firmly established, would be the best barrier against Russian encroachment." But neither England nor Prussia followed suit, and insistence might

mean that the Tsar would suddenly break off with the London conference. How else could so much be asked of the Holy Alliance? Poland would pay with her freedom for the independence of Belgium.

Belgium, however, seemed threatened again, and Talleyrand had to go into battle once more. The "French party," which controlled the Congress, had the Duke de Nemours elected King on January 18, 1831. When the news was telegraphed to London, there was a real panic. Talleyrand alone remained calm. No one was more opposed than he to having the son of Louis-Philippe accept the crown, but he tried to derive some advantage from the refusal which he advised the King to make. While he wrote to Paris in this fashion, he approached Palmerston in a forthright manner and easily guessed his feelings. "Would England accept the election of a French prince?" One can imagine what sort of answer was to be expected and was received. On the Prince's advice, Louis-Philippe declined the offer of the crown in his son's behalf. Then to avoid any unwelcome candidacies, the Prince had the Conference decide that the position was closed to any prince who belonged to a reigning family. Arguing that France's disinterestedness, which had been so clearly demonstrated, gave him the right to take up the defense of the new State, he declared, in the name of his country, that the "famous bases of separation were insufficient for Belgium," and refused to sign the accord. This was simply a method of increasing the appreciation of the complaisance he was ready to give later. When Paris took this refusal seriously and asked him to stick to it, he ignored these instructions, and suddenly won the gratitude and sympathy of the Conference by accepting the "bases."

To tell the truth, the Belgians did not accept them. It has been said that Talleyrand himself then suggested a partition of the Belgian state: Anvers to England; Luxembourg, Liège, and Limburg to Prussia; Flanders to Holland; Namur, Hainault, and Brabant to France. Nothing is more unlikely, for it was Talleyrand who fought against any partition. "He would rather have cut off his hand" than see England, especially, again get a foothold on the continent. Neither Englishmen at Anvers or French at Brussels. He was strongly supported at Paris by the new president of the Council, Casimir Périer, who was as eager as Talleyrand to arrive at the famous *entente cordiale*. Palmerston himself had come around. Talleyrand pretended to do nothing without consulting him. Both France and England agreed to the election of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg on June 4, 1831. Louis-Philippe thought of having this German, the widower of an English princess, marry into his family. While Palmerston pretended not to be interested in this

election, he was grateful to Talleyrand for having been on his side. English suspicion was at last giving way. "The English and the French are *terribly* united and are working together against us," Metternich wrote rather spitefully on July 4. When the King of Holland invaded Belgium and seemed for a moment to be about to conquer it, the entrance of a small French army into Belgian territory alarmed Palmerston, but could not alienate him again, thanks to Talleyrand's assurances. When General Gérard's army was recalled to France after the Dutch had been repelled, Palmerston displayed "extraordinary joy." It was the English minister who inspired the Conference to beg "Prince de Talleyrand to be convinced that their courts would justly appreciate the resolution taken by the French government."

The Conference definitely decided Belgium's fate in the Treaty of Twenty-Four Articles on October 15, 1831 and imposed it upon both parties, in accordance with Talleyrand's proposal. When the continental powers made a show of putting up opposition, Palmerston had thrown himself in France's arms because of this very opposition. France, supported by England, forced Europe to yield. Ancillon, the ruling minister of Prussia, said that France "during the peace and without drawing a sword had derived numerous and real advantages." The chief advantage was the return of the new monarchy to its place among the European nations among which she was already laying down the law. This was Talleyrand's work.

"Neutrality"

He had managed this long and difficult maneuver with consummate skill. All the pacts signed by the Conference had been conceived and signed under his influence. He had had two goals: to unite France and England in common action; then, thanks to this action, to make the continental powers agree to the dissolution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which was a menace to the French flank. He did not hesitate to emphasize this success, and, as a consequence of the proclamation of Belgian neutrality, he arranged the demolition of the fortifications which had been reared against France after 1815. "The principle of demolition," he wrote on December 15, 1831, "is established and recognized. The harm done to France has been repaired, and the forty-five millions which the fortifications cost the allies have been lost."

When the Conference proclaimed Belgian neutrality, it seemed that the Prince had won. "Yesterday was one of those days," he wrote to Mme Adélaïde, "which seem to me to have an important place in my life. With the stroke of a pen, the King wiped out a foreign demand

which wounded national pride." The delighted Louis-Philippe wrote to Casimir Périer that the declaration was "one of M. de Talleyrand's great strokes." Victory followed victory. Irritated by the opposition of the Holy Alliance to the Treaty of Twenty-Four Articles, Palmerston decided upon a formal accord with France, which was intended to discourage the opposition of the Courts. The Prince boasted about it in the privacy of his correspondence. "England and France re-united by a simultaneous exchange of ratifications. This is more than I dared hope for," he wrote on January 31, 1832. "Now the problem is to be patient. The rest will not be long coming. Let us claim nothing. Let us not triumph too much . . . let us not allow England to see that her alliance with us involves her more deeply than she wishes . . . Outside of France, we have created for ourselves a situation which is everything that the King could desire." He was given full credit in Paris. "After this masterful stroke," wrote Royer-Collard to Barante, "M. de Talleyrand will come back covered with glory, if he comes back. I think he has served France well."

He had served her well and continued to serve her well until the signing of the convention of August 18, 1834, which ended the Belgian affair and was the last act in the public life of this great diplomat.

His return to France

When the treaty of November 15, 1832, had been signed and its ratification had been obtained from Russia with great difficulty, he asked to return to France, if only to catch his breath. "For twenty months," he wrote, "I have lived only to reach the point I have attained. I have to think of my legs, of my eyes, and I have to look after my affairs." He had left on a flattering note. "Take good care of your health," Palmerston wrote to him, "recover quickly from your long fatigue, and above all, come back." England now could not do without the French ambassador.

He did come back, and, after a few months, won his last success. Since the King of the Netherlands did not submit to the decisions of the Conference, Talleyrand had Palmerston send the English fleet to blockade the Dutch coast. France had won the day.

Gradually his efforts had created a situation in Europe which for years seemed to strengthen the Franco-English *entente,* the principle of a regrouping of the powers. "From the beginning to the end of my career," he wrote, "a close alliance between France and England has been my dearest wish, since I am convinced that world peace, the strengthening of liberal ideas, and the progress of true civilization can be founded only

on this basis." He was already dreaming of an *entente* of the "constitutional nations," England, France, Spain, and Portugal, an *entente* in opposition to the Holy Alliance, which had been shattered and weakened by the accord with London.

He was able to leave his post. He returned to Paris on August 20, 1834, and after spending three months at Valençay, he sent his letter of resignation to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

39

THE END

Retirement

"I HAVE served more than my term," he had written as early as December 13, 1832, and yet he had been begged to serve longer. There had even been some question of again entrusting him with the portfolio of Foreign Affairs and the presidency of the Council, but he himself shrugged his shoulders. This would have been ridiculous for a man eighty-two years old, and, in a joking allusion to old men who remarry, he said, "I do not want to have any *charivari* in the Rue Saint-Florentin." No, he really aspired to nothing but retirement. "We shall soon be forgotten," Dorothy de Dino wrote to Thiers, "which suits us."

He was mayor of his commune and counselor general of his department. He fulfilled these modest duties with great exactitude. He "shut himself up in stay-at-home habits." He reread his authors, especially those of the seventeenth century. He began to reread Bossuet. He made notes of thoughts whose profundity is not astonishing in a man who had known so much of life and whose light tone, on the other hand, is not surprising in a man of such quick wit. One of them reveals his perfectly balanced state of mind: "When one is too severe or too indulgent, one runs the risk of treating weaknesses like crimes and crimes like weaknesses." The saying should put the biographer of Talleyrand on guard, especially. He talked a little, walked a little, continued to have a taste for good food, but no longer had any joy in it. Without becoming a pessimist, he had no joy in anything. "I am not happy, I am not unhappy," he wrote in his intimate journal. "My health is not good, it is not bad. I am getting weaker very gradually." He watched all those who were left of his old friends die, and was gloomy. "How many persons are falling about me!" he wrote in November, 1834.

One death, however, pleased him. It is terrible to say that it was the death of his wife. Since her unexpected return from England, she had lived in the Villa Beauséjour, then in a house on the Rue de Lille. Talleyrand had never gone to see her. Had he ever really loved her? She

had taken advantage of a moment of sensual folly in this man who was usually completely master of himself and had made him marry her. She reminded him of that long hour of aberration, of insanity, and, what was worse in his eyes, she recalled to him an error, an enormous blunder, a lapse of propriety which was unimaginable in this man who had placed "correctness" above everything. After a long time of being nothing but an annoyance which he had known how to avoid, she had become a ball and chain, far away as she was. Now that he had to think of death and of how he would negotiate his salvation with God, he saw her as the incarnation of his sin, the living proof of his revolt against his priestly vows, the woman whom he had married out of senseless bravado at the very moment the Church was ready to pardon his past and to open its arms to him. When she had returned against his will and in spite of the agreement between them, he had not wanted to see her again. He felt nothing but frightful displeasure. The charming creole with the rosy complexion and heavenly eyes who had been painted by Mme Vigée-Lebrun had become a huge fat woman with sagging features and a dull look, one of those poor creatures who never had more than their dazzling but fragile beauty and who burned up their charms too soon in the fire of their passions, and then made the frightful error of outlasting them. One day the Prince learned that she was dying at the age of seventy-three. He was cold and impassible as he heard the news, then, after a moment of silence, he spoke of something else. But the next day, as if she were already dead, he busied himself with the death notices and the regulation of his will. He had left her a fine capital and some income; he would take back that part of his fortune, that was all. But the unfortunate woman called for him. He only had to cross the Place de la Concorde and the bridge to reach the Rue de Lille, but he seems not to have thought of it. He was pleased and could not hide the fact. He was surprised as he was humming a tune. The Princess had sought the help of religion, and the archbishop, Monseigneur de Quelen had come to her. She asked God's pardon for "all the scandals which she might have caused." Until the end, she hoped that Maurice would grant her another pardon, but he did not come. He was punishing her for his own faults. She died on December 10, 1835. He did not appear at her funeral. When he learned of her death, he said to Mme de Dino, "That simplifies my position greatly." He was evidently thinking of the famous retraction which reconciled him with the Church. Yes, everything was simplified.

He thought of death, but constantly clung to life. He kept his hold on life through his dealings with men. He had always liked to receive

guests, to talk and to make others talk. In his splendid but gloomy Valençay,—*"unheimlich,"* said Mme de Dino (she even said "sinister") —he was eager for visitors, of whom he had all kinds. Having heard of a powerful novelist whose fame was growing, he decided to dazzle him and succeeded. Honoré de Balzac was stupefied when he left the château. "M. de Talleyrand is astonishing," he wrote. "He had two or three spurts of prodigious ideas." The favorite visitor was Adolphe Thiers, who was now received as an equal. He had been a minister three times and was about to become president of the Council; he no longer belonged to the future, but to a terribly alive present. Though he usually had so little enthusiasm about anyone else, Talleyrand was full of enthusiasm about this prematurely brilliant career. If someone said that the "little minister" was a "parvenu," Talleyrand would answer, "M. de Thiers is not a 'parvenu.' He has arrived." In 1836, he said to Thiers, "Monsieur, Europe is waiting for you." And he used his influence with the King to push the little fellow ahead, but, on the other hand, he put him on guard against a weakness which he noticed in him, the love of popularity. "You know, my dear fellow," he said to him, "I have been more discredited morally than any man who has existed in Europe for forty years and I have always been all-powerful or about to become so again." Thiers did not miss one word of his teachings. He eagerly took up the torch which came to him from the failing hands of the old statesman.

Talleyrand reappears

To give him a public demonstration of his esteem and perhaps to show all Paris that he was still very much alive, Talleyrand wanted to be present at the reception of his favorite by the Académie Française on December 13, 1834. His entrance created such a sensation and the sensation lasted so long that the new member was almost forgotten. The attention of the public was completely fixed upon the most celebrated of Frenchmen. It was at that time that Charles X, who was in exile, said, "What! That old Talleyrand is still alive then?"

He was too much of a realist not to be aware of the approach of death. He had made his will by January, 1834. He wrote a declaration or, as he called it, his "manifesto," on October 1, 1836. He defended himself against the charge of ever having been unfaithful in the depths of his heart "to the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion," and, as for men, he had never been unfaithful to them except when they had been unfaithful to themselves. "The result is that of all the governments which I have

served, there is not one from which I received more than I gave it, that I did not abandon one of them before it abandoned itself." This was not his *mea culpa,* for that hour never came. His *mea culpa* fell upon others. And yet, as if an invisible hand held his and guided his pen, the old man suddenly softened. About whom? About Napoleon! "Put by Bonaparte himself under the necessity of choosing between France and him, I made the choice which was prescribed by the most imperious of all duties, but lamenting that I was no longer able, as in the past, to identify the interests of my country and his. I shall be no less mindful in my last hour that he was my benefactor, for the fortune which I am bequeathing to my nephews comes in great part from him." And he added that "if ever a man bearing the name of Bonaparte should be in such a financial situation that he needed to be helped or succored," he laid it as a duty upon his heirs to assist him.

Like the most miserable of human beings, he now had his hours of depression, almost of fright, before the emptiness of a life that seemed so full of success and profit. "Such useless agitation!" he noted on February 2, 1837. "Such fruitless attempts, tiresome complications, exaggerated emotions, squandered gifts, inspired malevolence, loss of perspective, exhausted tastes! What result at last? That of moral and physical fatigue, of complete discouragement, and of profound disgust with the past." But at other moments he took hold of himself, stood erect again. Seeing the approach of death, he constantly felt the need to confirm the fact that he was alive. At Thiers' reception by the Académie, he had not wanted to be merely a spectator, though he was so dazzling that he became the chief spectacle. He wanted something more. Reinstated in the Institute when the Academy of Moral Science was re-established in 1832, he wanted to make himself heard there. Since his friend and fellow member, Count Reinhard, had died, he wanted to pronounce his funeral elegy at the solemn session of March 3, 1837. "It is my farewell to the public," he said. "Nothing will keep me from doing it." He did it in an excellent fashion, and, because Reinhard had been in the ministry of Foreign Relations for a few months in 1799, he used this fact as his text and drew the portrait of the perfect minister of Foreign Affairs, in which everyone saw more Talleyrand than Reinhard. A crowd of the elite had filled the hall to listen and applaud. His face expressionless, his gait still awkward, he left the hall between two rows of men and women who were mute with wonder. Congratulations were showered upon the Prince's desk the next day. He had been one of the greatest actors on the stage of history; he had wanted to make

his farewell appearance for no other reason than to satisfy his pride.

Having thus taken leave of men, he set about obtaining an audience with God.

The last months

Talleyrand entered his eighty-fifth year on February 2, 1838. He would not see the trees of the Tuileries grow green again more than once. Those who knew him wondered how this man who had lived so much would receive death. Someone boasted about his well-known *savoir-vivre* to the Duchess de Broglie, Germaine de Staël's daughter. "Yes, *savoir-vivre,*" observed this great Christian, "but what he needs now is to know how to die." He went to extremes to show that he knew how to die.

With the last days of a prodigiously active life, we approach a page that is very difficult to write. Though he was a bad priest, an apostate bishop, a Christian barred from communion, who for forty-nine years could not receive the sacraments of the Church, he died reconciled with the Church and armed with all its sacraments. He had retracted, but had he repented? It is always a dangerous presumption on the part of a historian to pretend to sound out a man's heart, but when a dying man is concerned, how can the rules of criticism be applied, when, as many facts prove, the shadows which gradually envelop a dying man so often shed light upon him which he never knew when he was alive?

I shall leave aside the more or less ironic, spiteful, or disapproving comments which pitiless enemies or astonished friends made the day after his death. "After having tricked everyone," said one of the first, "he wanted to finish by tricking God." Another said, "He will have deceived everyone, even the devil." "After this conversion, I no longer believe in any, even of stocks." Thiers, with his Voltairian narrowness, seemed outraged, and said, "He has spoiled his whole life by this stupid sermon,"—which simply proves that there was a great difference in the quality of the spirits of Talleyrand and Thiers. There is more truth in a terrible page by Chateaubriand, his often penetrating enemy, who was indignant that "this old man, three-quarters rotted away . . . wrangled from minute to minute over his reconciliation with Heaven."

The last negotiation

For several years he had been especially fond of Pauline de Périgord, daughter of the Duchess de Dino, of all "the children of the family." When she made her first communion in London in 1834, she came to ask for her great-uncle's benediction at her mother's request. It was the

first time since 1790 that he had been called upon to give his blessing, and, according to Mme de Dino, he was so deeply moved that he said to her, "How touching is the piety of a young girl, and how contrary to nature is unbelief, especially in women." Pauline was very pious and also very charming. Her great-uncle said, "she is the angel of the house." After his return to France in 1834, he loved to take walks with her in Paris. One day when they entered Saint-Sulpice, she was astonished to see him lost in meditation. Finally he said to her, "It is there that I was baptized." The young girl's confessor was the Abbé Dupanloup, who lived in a distant part of Paris. The Prince did a great deal to facilitate her visits to her confessor.

I have told how as he lay dying, old Cardinal de Talleyrand had sent his nephew a touching appeal to return to the religion from which "his heart had never been far away." Mgr. de Quelen, a great-hearted prelate, who was the cardinal's coadjutor and friend before he became his successor, had received from him as a sort of legacy the task of watching over and winning back the soul of the ex-bishop of Autun. Shortly after the cardinal's death, he sent a pathetic appeal to the Prince, and in 1835, after the death of the Princess, at which, as I have said, he renewed this appeal. He revealed to the Prince that the Pope took special interest in him. "As the ambassador of Jesus Christ to the souls of my diocese, and specially delegated to yours by the Holy See, I have no need, my Prince, to outline for you the conditions of peace which the omnipotent and compassionate King of the Universe offers you. You know them better than anyone else." Quelen spoke to him in the familiar manner of an ambassador addressing a high minister in regard to a difficult negotiation.

The difficulty was that it was not a matter of converting an impious man nor of making a sinner repent, but of obtaining a disavowal of public faults by a retraction which the Prince's pride inclined him to refuse until the very end. It was even to be feared that if he were solicited too often, his pride would increase, and, as it happened, he would consider himself a "power" to be treated with. The archbishop intended to clear up the "Talleyrand case" himself. Had not the ex-bishop declared and seemed to believe that he had been restored to communion with the Church by Pius VII? "To lay communion only," Gregory XVI had replied after an investigation, but *"salva obligatione perpetuae castitatis servandae"* (except for the obligation of preserving perpetual chastity). This saying in relation to the Prince must have amused Paris. It meant that marriage was forbidden to the former bishop, who was otherwise allowed to repent. But he had rushed into

marriage, and thus again put himself into a very serious situation. "It will be necessary," said the Holy Father, "that he be made to repent first of all, and to make sufficient amends which he owes to the Church and to the faithful." Armed with this reply and advised by theologians, the prelate had made a "formula for amends," which he had ready. But who would dare to take it to the man in question? Talleyrand saw few priests, was intimate with none, and the mission was delicate. Then Felix Dupanloup, the future bishop of Orléans, came on the scene.

Pauline used to sing the praises of the abbé to her uncle. While still very young, he had become the superior of the little seminary of Saint Nicholas and the vicar-general of Paris. One day the Prince said, "I should not be displeased to make his acquaintance." The Duchess de Dino invited the abbé to dinner on February 6, 1837, a day on which, I know not why, there was always a family party for the Prince. Undoubtedly because of certain scruples, Dupanloup excused himself. "This refusal astonishes me," observed the Prince. "I have been told that the Abbé Dupanloup was a man of wit. If that were true, he would have come. He would have realized the importance of his entrance into this house." There was still a great deal of pride in this remark, but an unusual sentiment as well. With his love of difficult negotiations, the Prince wanted to take charge even of the negotiation that would lead him back to God. He wanted this so much that, even though his *amour propre* was offended for a moment, he again invited the abbé to dinner. Dupanloup had either thought things over or consulted his archbishop, for he accepted. The Prince took him aside and talked with him about his memories of Saint-Sulpice and about preaching. Dupanloup was astonished by the turn of the conversation and by the "religious preoccupations" which he perceived in it. When he had taken his leave, Talleyrand said to Pauline, "Your abbé pleases me. He knows how to live." Probably either through cleverness or timidity, the abbé had let the Prince do all the talking.

Some time later, the Prince said to the Duchess de Dino, "If I fell seriously ill, I should ask for a priest. . . . Do you think that the Abbé Dupanloup would come with pleasure?"

The Duchess was delighted. Since she had become very religious, she had years ago given herself the task of bringing her uncle back to God.

"I have no doubt of it," she answered, "but if he is to be of any use to you, you must return to the common order which you unfortunately left."

"Yes, I know," said the Prince, "I have something I must do in regard

to Rome. I have been thinking of it for a rather long time. Do you know what is wanted of me? Why don't they tell me?"

Since she had informed herself about the matter, she was able to tell the Prince that the three points on which Rome demanded his retraction were his oath to the Civil Constitution, the consecration of the constitutional bishops, and his unfortunate marriage.

He said nothing about the first two grievances, but exclaimed about the third, "But I was free. Pius VII's brief freed me from my vows as priest and bishop." Was he sincere? At any rate, his niece intended to enlighten him. As a bishop, he could not marry without creating a scandal. He promised to reflect and "not to delay," adding, "I do not want anyone ever to attribute what I do to the weakness of old age."

Abbé Dupanloup returned. He had sent the Prince a copy of Fénelon's *Christianity Presented to Worldly Men*. This time he left him his own edition of Bossuet's *Christian's Day*.

The Prince, however, without telling anyone, was working on a plan for retraction. He gave it to his niece, who submitted it to the archbishop. Excusing his past defection on the grounds of a forced vocation, he declared that he had thought that Pius VII had freed him from celibacy, and that therefore he had sinned only through an error. Monseigneur promised to send him a formula. The Prince let him know that it was urgent. He felt himself threatened, for he sometimes grew numb, sometimes felt stifled.

The end

In the beginning of May, 1838, however, he seemed to be getting better; he took a few walks. But on the thirteenth, he had a violent attack of suffocation. Dr. Cruveilhier diagnosed his condition as a carbuncle in the lumbar region, and advised surgery. When the Abbé Dupanloup arrived two days later, the doctor told him, "If you can do something, do it at once. There is not much time." The abbé hastened to the Prince's bedside.

"I am very ill," he said, and asked him if he brought him a formula. The abbé gave it to him, and the Prince expressed his satisfaction, but instead of signing it, he said, "Will you leave this paper with me? I want to reread it again." He was still the man who had made *Festina lente* his motto, for as he often said, he had been careful not to be in a hurry all his life. He pretended that he had always done things at the time he had fixed.

But on the night of the fifteenth, it seemed as if he were going to die. Dupanloup was received by the dying man in the morning. He spoke to him again about his declaration.

"Yes," said the Prince, "I want all that. I want it, as you know."

"But he cannot be given the last sacraments," observed the abbé, "before he has signed his retraction."

The sick man, however, still said that he wanted to "look over the papers." "I want to add something," he said, "and I am too tired at the moment. I will tell you when it is time." He evidently was making it a point of pride not to seem forced or influenced, to remain master of the operation, as he had at Vienna or London. He treated with God as he had with the chancelleries, when he kept putting them off for the sake of some game he was playing.

The Abbé Dupanloup, who was extremely troubled, came back at eight in the evening. He found the Prince with his niece and his grand-niece, Pauline. Had the paper been signed?

"It will be done," he said sharply.

"But when will that be, my dear uncle?" asked Pauline anxiously.

"Tomorrow between five and six in the morning," he replied in a peremptory tone. The abbé did not dare to insist.

"I may then offer the archbishop this hope?" he said simply.

"Do not say this hope. Say certainty. It is positive."

A singular stubbornness which was certainly inspired by an incurable pride. There was nothing in him of the sinner who throws himself at God's feet. He was the negotiator who does not want to be hurried. God would have his hour—that of the Prince de Talleyrand. He thought that his declaration would have all the more effect because it would thus confirm his presence of mind—to the point of excess. But on the night of the sixteenth, he suffered from new attacks of suffocation. After the crisis was over, the frightened Pauline said to him, "Uncle, you are calm now. Don't you want to sign these two papers?"

"But it is not six o'clock," he said impatiently. "I have told you that I will sign between five and six in the morning. I again promise you to do it."

The Abbé Dupanloup appeared at 4:30. Barante, Molé, Saint-Aulaire, and Royer-Collard, who were among the Prince's most intimate friends, were sent for to witness the signature. Talleyrand was dozing. He suddenly woke up. "What time is it?" he murmured. "Prince, it is five o'clock," the abbé replied. At that moment a child wearing a white tulle veil came into the chamber. She was the daughter of the Baron de Talleyrand, the Prince's cousin, and Charlotte, a mysterious young woman who was thought to be the daughter of Talleyrand himself. She was leaving for her first communion, and, like Pauline six years before, she asked for the old man's benediction. The Abbé de Périgord

of 1788, and Citizen Talleyrand de Périgord of 1799 even more, would have been astonished if anyone would have told him that he would end his life as a patriarch, giving blessings.

At any rate, the child left in her white veil, and when six o'clock struck, the old Prince sat up and finally asked for the famous papers.

"Do you want me to reread these papers to you?" asked Mme de Dino.

"Yes, read." Everyone stood listening in profound silence.

"More and more touched by serious considerations, led to judge calmly the consequences of a revolution which swept everything along with it and which lasted for fifty years, I finally, at a great age and after long experience, blame the excesses of the century to which I belonged, and frankly condemn the great errors which for many long years have troubled the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman church, and in which I had the misfortune to share.

"If it is pleasing to the respected friend of my family, Monseigneur the Archbishop of Paris, who has assured me of the benevolent dispositions of the Sovereign Pontiff in regard to me, to send the Holy Father, as I wish, the assurance of my respectful gratitude and of my complete submission to the doctrine and the discipline of the Church, to the decisions and judgments of the Holy See about the ecclesiastical affairs of France, I dare to hope that His Holiness will receive them graciously.

"Granted dispensation later by the venerable Pius VII from the exercise of ecclesiastical duties, during my long political career I sought opportunities to render all services in my power to religion and to many honorable and distinguished members of the Catholic clergy. Never have I ceased to think of myself as a child of the Church. I again deplore the acts of my life that have saddened it, and my last wishes will be for the Church and for her supreme leader."

The Prince had listened with the greatest attention to the reading of the act of retraction. He asked for the paper, and wrote his signature with a hand that was still firm. "Charles-Maurice, Prince de Talleyrand," —that famous signature which had been put to so many diplomatic acts and which had decided the fate of millions of men, and which, on this day, was perhaps opening the Kingdom of Heaven to him. His *sang-froid* was so great that he was the only one to think that people might say that such a serious act, signed *in extremis,* must have been extorted from an unfortunate dying man.

"What was the date of my speech at the Academy?" he asked his niece.

"March 3."

"Well, write the tenth, so that it will be the same week. Done on March 10, 1838. Signed on May 17, 1838 at Paris." The Abbé Dupanloup took the paper to the Archbishop, who was satisfied with it.

The King and Mme Adélaïde arrived unexpectedly at about eight in the morning. The dying man thanked them in his courtly fashion. This visit from the sovereigns was the sign of the presence of death. Louis-Philippe, however, seemed even more affected than the dying man. The King remained silent and withdrew. As his sister pressed his hand, the Prince said with some emotion, "I love you, indeed."

The Abbé Dupanloup returned at ten o'clock.

"You have been reconciled with the Catholic Church which you distressed," he said. "The moment has come to reconcile yourself with God by a new vow and by sincere repentance for all the faults of your life."

He confessed the Prince and administered the last sacraments. The dying man followed the rites attentively. He made a remark which proves to what degree he retained his presence of mind. At their consecration, bishops received the unction on the back of their hands, not on the palms, like the rest of the faithful, when they were anointed with the holy oil.

The ex-prelate held out his closed fists to the Abbé Dupanloup, saying, "Do not forget, Monsieur Abbé, that I am a bishop."

The remark is astonishing. In the Prince's eyes, it was the Bishop of Autun who was dying. The rest of his life was forgotten. Dupanloup began to recite the prayers for the dying on his knees. He was still reciting them at 3:35, when the Prince had a slight convulsion and expired.

This was not the death of a repentant culprit, striking his breast and crying, "Lord, pity me, a sinner!" This was the death of a man who had spent his life calculating, weighing, reflecting, in order to arrive at his ends, fortune, power, honor, authority, and who kept his self-control until the end, not giving in to the Church, to religion, to God until he had once more calculated, weighed, and reflected. One can die more simply.

"God himself must have spoken to his soul and have told him what no human voices could ever say," wrote the Duchess de Broglie. "I hope so, I believe it. God sounds out hearts and consciences. He is the God of truth and of compassion, too."

The historian can judge a life. But how can he judge a death and substitute himself for Him who alone can "sound out hearts and consciences"?

APPENDIX

PERSONS, FAMILIES, AND HISTORICAL EVENTS FIGURING IN THE LIFE OF TALLEYRAND

Principal Persons

Adélaïde, Eugène Louise, Princess, 1777–1847, sister of Louis-Philippe.

Andreossy, Antoine François, Count, 1761–1828, French general, chief of staff, and ambassador to Austria, England, and Turkey.

Barras, de, Paul François, Count, 1755–1829, Director of the French Republic, and a partisan of The Mountain.

Bernadotte, Carl XIV. John, King of Sweden and Norway, Prince of Ponte Corvo, 1764–1844, French marshal under Napoleon, ardent republican, elected king.

Berthier, Louis Alexandre, Prince of Wagram, 1753–1815, French marshal and chief of staff under Napoleon.

Blacas, de, Pierre Louis Jean Casimir, Duke, 1770–1839, French statesman, negotiator of the Concordat.

Bonaparte, Joseph, 1768–1844, King of Naples, thereafter King of Spain, diplomat and soldier.

Bonaparte, Napoleon, 1769–1821, Emperor of the French and greatest general of modern times.

Castlereagh, Robert Steward, Lord, 1769–1822, English Tory statesman and leader of the coalition against France.

Caulaincourt, Armand Augustin Louis, Duke de Vicence, 1773–1827, French diplomat and supporter of Napoleon.

Charles X, Count d'Artois, 1757–1836, King of France from 1824 to 1830.

Courlande, de, Dorothy, Duchess of Dino, wife of Talleyrand's nephew, who became Talleyrand's hostess and companion for many of his later years.

Dumouriez, Charles François, 1739–1823, French general and statesman.

Duroc, Gérard Christophe Michel, Duke, 1772–1813, French general and favorite of Napoleon I.

Fouché, Joseph, Duke d'Orante, 1763–1820, French Jacobin politician, minister under the Directory, Napoleon, and Louis XVIII.

Francis II, 1768–1835, ruler of Austria, reigned as Emperor Francis I of Austria from 1804 to 1835.

Grand, Catherine-Noël Worlée, 1765–1835, Talleyrand's wife.

Hauterive, d', Alexandre Maurice Blanc-de Lanautte, Talleyrand's assistant in the ministry of foreign affairs.

Louis XVIII, Louis Stanislas Xavier, Count of Provence, 1755–1824, reigned as King of France from April, 1814, to March, 1815, and from June, 1815, to 1824.

Louis-Philippe, 1773–1850, King of France from 1830 to 1848.

Metternich, von, Clemenz Wenzel, Prince, 1773–1859, Austrian conservative statesman and diplomat, leader in the coalition against France.

Mirabeau, Honoré Gabriel Victor Riquette, Count, 1749–1791, French revolutionary leader and orator.

Rémussat, de, Claire, Countess, 1780–1821, French authoress, friend and confidante of Talleyrand.

Savary, Anne Marie Réné, Duke of Rovigo, 1774–1836, French general and diplomat.

Sieyès, Emanuel Joseph, Count, Abbé, 1748–1836, French revolutionist.

Staël-Holstein, de, Anne Louise Germaine, Baronne, 1766–1817, a daughter of Necker, the financier, a French authoress and leader in society, confidante of Talleyrand. Called Mme de Staël.

Talleyrand-Périgord, Alexandre Angélique, Cardinal, 1736–1821, French prelate, uncle of Talleyrand.

Thiers, Louis Adolphe, 1797–1877, politician sponsored by Talleyrand, ultimately first president of the Third French Republic.

Royal Families

The Bourbons

Louis XVIII, Louis Stanislas Xavier, Count of Provence, younger brother of Louis XVI, restored to the throne in 1814 (Louis XVII having died in prison).

Charles X, Count d'Artois, brother and successor to Louis XVIII, reigning from 1824 to 1830.

Charles Ferdinand, Duke de Berry and thereafter Count d'Artois, nephew of Louis XVIII.

Henri, Duke de Bordeaux, and Count de Chambord, son of the Duke de Berry, held to be the heir by legitimatists, and styled Henri V.

Louis Antoine de Bourbon, Duke d'Angoulême, Dauphin after 1824.

Louis Antoine Henri de Bourbon-Condé, Duke d'Enghien, executed in 1804 by order of Napoleon I.

Marie Thérèse Charlotte, Duchess d'Angoulême, wife of the Dauphin.

The Orléans Branch

Louis Philippe Joseph, the "Red Prince," called Philippe Égalité, executed during the Revolution, 1793.

Louis-Philippe, King of France, Duke d'Orléans and Duke de Chartres, son of the "Red Prince," called to the throne in 1830.
Marie Amélie, his wife.
Princess Adélaïde, his sister.

Major Historical Events

1789 French States-General convened to meet national crisis.
National Assembly constituted by the Third Estate, representing the people, as distinct from the nobility and the clergy.
Bastille Prison stormed.
1790 Assembly of the Clergy convened.
Civil Constitution of the Clergy passed by the Assembly.
Titles and formal usages of the nobility abolished.
1791 Assembly completes the constitution.
1792 France declares war on Austria.
Year one of the new Republican calendar is established.
1793 Louis XVI is executed.
Reign of Terror is begun under Danton, Marat, and Robespierre.
Marie Antoinette is executed.
1794 Reign of Terror ends, with execution of Robespierre.
1795 Peace of Basel completed with Prussia.
Napoleon Bonaparte restores order.
Directory established, under new Constitution of the Year III.
1797 Peace of Campo-Formo signed with Austria, after victories by Napoleon.
1798 Napoleon's expedition against the English in Egypt.
1799 Napoleon by *coup d'état* proclaims the Consulate and overthrows the Directory.
1800 Napoleon defeats the Austrians at Marengo.
1801 Austria makes peace at Lunéville.
Napoleon re-establishes the Catholic Church in France by means of a Concordat with Pius VII.
1802 Peace of Amiens signed between Great Britain and France, Spain, and Batavian Republic.
Napoleon named Consul for life.
1803 Louisiana ceded to the United States.
1804 Civil Code published (later enacted in 1807 as Code Napoleon).
Conspiracy against Napoleon discovered. Bourbon prince, the Duke d'Enghien, executed.
Napoleon crowned hereditary Emperor of the French.
1805 French defeated at naval Battle of Trafalgar.
Napoleon defeats Austria and Prussia in the Battle of Austerlitz.
Peace of Pressburg signed by France and Austria.
1806 Napoleon defeats the Prussians at Jena.

1807 Napoleon meets the Prussians and Russians in indecisive battle at Eylau.
Treaty of Tilsitt partitions Poland.
1808 Joseph Bonaparte made King of Spain.
Erfurt conferences between Napoleon and Alexander I of Russia.
1809 Austria renews war, only to be defeated by Napoleon at Wagram.
1810 Napoleon marries Marie-Louise, daughter of the Emperor of Austria.
1812 Napoleon undertakes disastrous campaign against Russia.
Retreat from Moscow.
1814 France invaded by the Allies, and Paris besieged.
Talleyrand forms provisional government.
Napoleon abdicates.
Louis XVIII, brother of Louis XVI, called to the throne in the first restoration.
Napoleon banished to Elba.
Congress of all European powers assembles at Vienna to reorganize the continent.
1815 Napoleon escapes from Elba and returns in triumph to Paris.
The Hundred Days of Napoleon's new rule in France.
Final defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo.
Napoleon abdicates a second time.
Louis XVIII recalled in second restoration.
Second Peace of Paris restores the 1790 boundaries of France.
1818 Congress of the powers held at Aix-la-Chapelle.
1820 French succession imperiled by assassination of the Duke de Berry.
1821 Napoleon dies at St. Helena.
1824 Charles X becomes king upon death of his brother, Louis XVIII.
1830 Charles X institutes series of extreme royalist acts against the chamber of deputies and the journals.
Revolution in Paris overthrows the Bourbons.
Louis-Philippe, Duke of Orléans, crowned king.
1831 More liberal constitution voted.

INDEX

Aberdeen, George Hamilton Gordon, Earl, 294
Adélaïde, Eugène Louise, Princess, 281, 282, 289, 293, 297, 310
Aiguillon, Mme, 87
Aix-la-Chapelle, Congress of (1818), 270
Alexander I, Tsar, 114, 116, 117, 121, 125, 126, 129, 135, 137, 138, 150, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 160, 173, 174, 175, 177, 179, 186, 187, 192, 193, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 207, 211, 212, 220, 224, 225, 227, 228, 233, 236, 237, 238, 239, 242, 258, 259, 267, 284, 289
Algiers, 283, 284
America, 20, 45, 46, 50, 82, 104, 262
Amiens, Peace of (March 25, 1802), 98
Ancillon, Johann Peter Friedrich, 297
Andreossy, Antoine François, Count, 130
Angot, Mme, 106
Angoulême, d', Duke, 276
Angoulême, d', Marie, Duchess, 217, 276
Antigny, de, Alexandrine de Dumas. *See* Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Alexandrine, Countess.
Antraigue, d', Count, 102
Apponyi, Rudolph, Count, 276
Artois, d', Count, 12, 30, 110, 111, 189, 192, 203, 208, 209, 217, 247, 252, 253, 254, 271, 276. *See also* Charles X.
Assembly of the Clergy, 11
Asturia, Prince of, 148
Augereau, 59
Auguste (little Morny), 21
Austerlitz, Battle of (1805), 120, 121, 123, 128, 132, 137, 150, 160
Austria, 24, 25, 43, 58, 60, 79, 80, 81, 98, 100, 102, 104, 105, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 126, 128, 130, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 150, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 161, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, 179, 180, 182, 187, 188, 219, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 231, 237, 239, 240, 241, 242, 245, 290, 292
Autraigues, d', Count, 28
Aymon de la Roche, Cardinal, 17

Baden, 116
Baden, Duke of, 105, 112
Bagration, Countess, 236
Balkans, 117
Barante, de, Claude, Baron, 274, 298, 308
Barclay de Tolly, Michael, Prince, 258
Barras, de, Paul François, Count, 53, 54, 55-6, 59, 61, 67, 69, 70-1, 72, 77, 104, 111, 246, 254, 280
Barthélemy, d', François, Marquis, 53
Bassano, de, Duke. *See* Maret.
Bassano, de, Duchess, 175
Batavian Republic, 67, 69
Bavaria, 116, 118, 141, 235, 237
Bavaria, King of, 229, 242
Baylen, Battle of, 150, 158
Beauharnais, de, Eugène, Viceroy of Italy, 163
Belgium, 51, 60, 212, 219, 224, 228, 249, 287, 290-99
Bénévent, Princess of. *See* Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Catherine.
Benezech, Mme, 87
Benninsen, Levin, 133
Béranger, 279
Bernadotte, Carl XIV. John, King of Sweden and Norway, Prince of Ponte Corvo, 124, 163, 174
Bernis, Cardinal, 24
Berry, de, Charles Ferdinand d'Artois, Duke, 253
Berthier, Louis Alexandre, Prince of Wagram, 61, 62, 142, 182, 183
Beugnot, de, Jacques Claude, Count, 208, 216
Beurnonville, de, Pierre de Ruel, Marquis, 203
Biren, de, Dorothy. *See* Courlande, de, Dorothy.
Blacas, de, Pierre Louis Jean Casimir, Duke, 217, 250
Blanc d'Hauterive, Alexandre Maurice de Lanautte, 24, 112, 118, 119, 160, 162, 223
Blücher, von, Gebhard, General, 186, 192, 254, 258, 259
Bohemia, 234
Boisgelin, 189
Bonaparte, Caroline Marie, Queen of Naples, 237
Bonaparte family, 148
Bonaparte, Joseph. *See* Joseph.
Bonaparte, Josephine. *See* Josephine.
Bonaparte, Lucien, 85, 94, 108
Bonaparte, Madame, 163
Bonaparte, Napoleon. *See* Napoleon I.
Bordeaux, de, Duke, 276
Borodino, Battle of (1812), 177
Borgo, Pozzo di. *See* Pozzo di Borgo.
Bossuet, Jacques Bénigne, 300, 307
Boufflers, de, Countess, 20
Boulay de Meurthe, 109
Bourbons, 24, 46, 49, 78, 84, 87, 108, 109, 111, 123, 146, 147, 148, 158, 162, 163, 177, 178, 188, 190, 192, 195, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 211, 212, 215, 226, 236, 237, 243, 244, 246, 247, 273, 275, 276, 281, 284, 285
Bourgoign, Mme, 87
Bourlier, Bishop, 21
Bourrienne, 190, 202
Brandenburg, House of, 126
Brézé, de, Mme. *See* Dreux-Brézé, de, Mme.
Broglie, de, Albert, Prince, 147
Broglie, de, Albertine Ida Gustavine de Staël, 304
Bruix, Admiral, 71
Bruix, Mme, 87
Bubna, Count, 179

Cacault, 90
Cadoudal, Georges, 110
Cadoudal-Pichegru conspiracy, 110
Cambacérès, de, Jean Jacques, Duke de Parma, 72, 77, 111, 115, 123, 144, 163, 166, 179
Campion de Cice, Archbishop, 22
Canada, 52
Canteleu, Mme, 87
Capet, Hugh, 12, 188, 215, 216, 282
Capet, Louis, Citizen. *See* Louis XVI.
Caprara, Giovanni, Cardinal, 92
Carnot, Lazare Nicolas, 12, 53, 55, 209
Carrel, Nicolas Armand, 281
Caselli, 88
Castellane, de, Boniface, Count, 56
Castellane, de, Mme, 87
Castellane, de, Countess. *See* Périgord, de, Pauline.
Castlereagh, Robert Stuart, Lord, 192, 218, 227, 235, 236, 239, 240, 241, 242
Catherine, Queen of Westphalia, 277
Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia, 80
Caulaincourt, Armand Augustin Louis, Duke de Vicence, 100, 108, 110, 111, 134, 137, 141, 142, 143, 144, 152, 153, 156, 157, 172, 175, 176, 179, 182, 183, 185, 186, 189, 190, 201, 202, 248, 249
Caumont, Mme, 87
Chabrol de Volvic, Gilbert, Count, 197
Chalais, de, Princess, 14
Chamillart, Michel, 13
Champagny, de, Nompère de. *See* Nompère de Champagny.
Champaubert, Battle of (1814), 186
Charlemagne, 114
Charles (Karl), Archduke of Austria, 118
Charles X, King of France, 277, 278, 280, 282, 283, 285, 286, 302. *See also* Artois, d', Count.
Chartres, de, Duke. *See* Egalité, Philip.
Chateaubriand, François Auguste, 61, 81, 95, 110, 147, 203, 250, 251, 252, 254, 278, 304
Chauvelin, de, Germain Louis, Count, 43
Chénier, Marie-Joseph, 46, 54-5
Choiseul, de, Etienne François, Duke, 23, 24, 25, 51, 53, 79, 80, 117, 130, 137
Choiseul-Gouffier, de, Marie Gabriel Florent Auguste, Count, 17, 19, 24
Christian, King of Denmark, 228
Cice, de, Campion, Archbishop. *See* Campion de Cice.
Cisalpine Republic, 67, 99, 100
Civil Constitution of the Clergy (July 12, 1790, and November 27, 1790), 33, 35
Clarke, Henri Jacques, Duke of Feltre, 137, 142, 165, 195
Clergy, Assembly of the. *See* Assembly of the Clergy.
Clergy, Civil Constitution of the. *See* Civil Constitution of the Clergy.
Clichy Club, 54
Clusel, Mme, 87
Cobenzl, von, Johann Philip, Count, 88, 98, 116, 120, 126
Cobenzl, von, Louis, Count, 120, 126, 169
Coigny, de, Aimée, Mme, Duchess de Fleury, 177, 178, 180, 188, 189, 281
Coigny, de, Chevalier, 87
Colbert, Jean Baptiste, 13
Columbus, Christopher, 50
Committee of Evaluations, 241
Committee of Public Welfare, 51, 58
Concordat of 1801, 87-92, 97, 165, 178
Condé, Louis Joseph de Bourbon, Prince, 111, 217
Condorcet, de, Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas Caritat, Marquis, 30
Consalvi, 90, 91, 92, 93
Constant, Benjamin, 54, 56
Constantine, Pavlovich, Grand Duke, 238
Constitutional Assembly, 22
Constitutional Club, 54
Consulate, The, 78, 84, 98-102, 106, 108, 142
Convention of August 18, 1834, 298
Cornwallis, Charles, Lord, 98
Conzié, Bishop, 85
Coquelle, 124
Courlande, de, Dorothy de Biren, Duchess de Dino, 68, 161, 223, 231, 267-8, 270, 271, 277, 279, 281, 289, 300, 301, 302, 304, 306, 308, 309
Courlande, de, Duchess, 175, 182, 185, 186, 190, 193, 204, 213, 218, 236, 249, 250, 251, 263, 268, 270, 271
Courtiade, 198
Crawford, Mrs., 272
Crillon family, 87
Cruveilhier, Dr., 307
Custine, Mme, 87
Czartorski, Adam, 238, 267

Dalberg, de, Charles, Duke, 40, 105, 133, 136, 192, 198, 202, 203, 223, 248, 274
Danguin, Thureau. *See* Thureau Danguin.
Danton, Georges Jacques, 12, 22, 43-4, 78, 102
Dard, Emile, 62, 78, 124, 141
Daru, Pierre Antoine Noël Bruno, Count, 274
Davout, Louis Nicolas, 209
Décazes, Elie, 256, 262, 268, 269, 271
Décres, Denis, 166
Delacroix, Charles, 55, 56
Delacroix, Eugene, 55
Delaveau, 277
Denmark, 228
Desrenaudes, Grand Vicar, 21
Dessoles, General, 271
Dillon, Arthur Richard, Archbishop, 22
Dino, de, Dorothy, Duchess. *See* Courlande, de, Dorothy.
Dino, de, Duke. *See* Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Edmond.
Directory, The, 111, 178, 216, 229
Dorinville, Dorothy, 17, 68
Douai, Merlin de. *See* Merlin de Douai.
Dreux-Brézé, de, Marquis, 270
Dreux-Brézé, de, Mme, also Mme de Dreux, 87
Du Barry circle, 23
Dubois, Guillaume, Cardinal, 24
Ducos, Roger-. *See* Roger-Ducos.
Dumouriez, Charles François, 43, 111, 112
Dupanloup, Félix, Abbé, 305, 306, 307, 308, 310
Dupont, General, 150
Duroc, Gerard Christophe Michèle, Duke, 179
Duvoisin, Jean Baptiste, Bishop, 21

Eckmuhl, Campaign of (1809), 171
Edelsheim, Baron of, 112
Egalité, Philip, 23, 188, 280
Egypt, 53, 63, 64
Empire, The, 15, 57, 114-5, 157, 160, 162, 180, 181, 182, 207, 208, 213, 214, 247, 277
Enghien, d', Louis Antoine Henri de Bourbon, Duke, 85, 108, 109, 110-3, 114, 165, 166, 171, 215, 217
England, 24, 41, 44, 45, 50, 59, 63, 64, 68, 80-1, 97, 101, 102, 115, 116, 117, 119, 121, 124, 125, 126, 129, 132, 134, 137, 142, 150, 153, 156, 218, 224, 225, 227, 231, 237, 239, 241, 242, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 290, 291, 292, 293, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299
Erfurt, Conference of (1808), 150-7, 162, 168
Eugène. *See* Beauharnais, de, Eugène.
Expilly, Bishop, 36
Eylau, Battle of (February 8, 1807), 133, 134, 135

Federation Mass (July 14, 1790), 34-5
Fenelon, François, 307
Ferdinand IV, 223

Ferdinand VII, King of Spain, 183, 274
Ferrero, Guglielmo, 213
Finland, 137, 228
Fitz-James, de, Duchess, 20
Fitz-James, de, Edouard, Duke, 274
Flauhaut, de, Adelaide Filleul, Countess (later Countess de Souza), 82
Flauhaut de la Billardie de, Count, 20
Flauhaut de la Billardie, de, Auguste Charles Joseph, Count, 20, 21, 248, 249
Fleurieu, de, Mme, 87
Fleury, 24
Fleury, de, Duchess. *See* Coigny, de, Aimée.
Floret, Count, 142, 172-3, 174, 180, 181
Fontanes, de, Louis, Count, 204
Fouché, Joseph, Duke d'Otrante, 12, 70, 71, 72, 85, 86, 102, 108, 109, 111, 112, 114, 143, 148, 152, 158-64, 166, 167, 169, 175, 190, 191, 247, 249, 253, 254, 256, 257, 259, 261, 262, 263
Fouquet, Nicolas, 170
Foy, Maximilien, General, 275, 279
Fox, Charles James, 43, 124, 125, 126
Francis I, 80
Francis II, 116, 120, 133, 153, 154, 156, 169, 172, 239
François de Neufchâteau, Nicolas Louis, Count, 59, 61, 77
Frederick II (the Great), 24, 117, 130
Frederick Augustus II, 226, 234, 235, 240, 245, 294
Frederick William II, 121, 198, 238, 239, 240, 259
Frederick William III, 105, 292, 293
Frenilly, 68
Friedland, Battle of (June 17, 1807), 135, 136, 142

Galicia, 130, 132
Gama, da, Vasco, 50
Garat, Dominique Joseph, 178, 189, 202
Gaudin, 168
Genoa, 117, 118, 219, 226, 228, 237
Genoan Republic, 67, 237
Gentz, de, Count, 220, 231, 233
George III, 42, 124
Gérard, Maurice Etienne, Count, 297
German Empire, Recess of, 100, 101
Germany, 51, 53, 78, 80, 116, 119, 121, 146, 152, 199, 212, 224, 225, 227, 228, 237, 250, 292
Germany, Campaign of (1815), 182
Girardin, de, Emile, 275
Girardin, de, Louis Stanislas, Count, 115
Gobel, Jean Baptiste, Bishop, 36, 37
Godoy, Manuel, 146
Goethe, von, Johann Wolfgang, 157
Goltz, de, Count, 138, 259
Gouffier. *See* Choiseul-Gouffier.
Gouttes, Jean Louis, 36
Gouvion Saint-Cyr, Laurent, Marshal, 123, 256
Grand, Catherine Noël Worlee. *See* Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Catherine.
Grand, George Francis, 68, 96
Grand Elector. *See* Joseph.
Great Britain. *See* England.
Greece, 283, 292
Grégoire, Henri, 202
Gregory XVI, 305, 306, 309
Grenville, William Wyndham, Lord, 42, 286
Guilay, 119
Guizot, 275
Gustav, 19

Hanover, 116, 117, 124, 126
Hapsburg family, 117, 130, 132, 135, 174, 292
Hardenberg, Karl Auguste, Prince, 138, 233, 235, 240
Hauwitz, von, Christian Heinrich Carl, 121, 128
Haussonville, d', Count, 288
Hauterive, d', Blanc. *See* Blanc d'Hauterive.
Helvetian Republic, 67, 99. *See also* Switzerland.
Henry IV, 208
Héricourt, d', Mme, 20
Hesse, Grand Duke of, 242
Himcar, Bishop, 15
Hoche, Lazare, General, 51
Hohenzollern family, 117, 128, 137, 227, 240, 292
Holland, 51, 99, 100, 219, 224, 228, 295, 296
Holland, King of, 285, 290, 291, 297
Holy Alliance, 274, 283, 284, 287, 290, 291, 292, 293, 296, 298
Holy Roman Empire, 80, 99, 119
Hortense, Queen, 21, 98, 111, 112, 170
Houssaye, Henry, 359
Hubler, 101
Humboldt, von, Karl Wilhelm, Baron, 235, 236
Hundred Days, The, 248-9
Hungary, 120, 234
Hyde de Neuville, Jean Guillaume, 84

Indies, 50, 52
Institute. *See* National Institute.
Italian Republic, 100, 101. *See also* Cisalpine Republic.
Italy, 24, 51, 53, 58, 78, 80, 85, 116, 118, 121, 135, 199, 219, 224, 226, 227, 238, 244, 287

Jacobins, 22, 48, 49, 54, 59, 60, 61, 262
Jarente, de, Bishop, 36
Jarente, de, Suzanne, 20
Jaucourt, de, Arnail François, Marquis, 44, 191, 202, 203, 223, 247, 248, 256
Jaucourt family, 87
Jena, Battle of (1806), 128, 132, 137
Jordan, Camille, 54
Joseph, Grand Elector, King of Naples, King of Spain, 71, 85, 98, 112, 123, 124, 132, 135, 142, 163, 183, 190, 191, 195, 196, 197
Josephine, Empress, 95, 96, 102, 112, 163, 173, 194
Jouberton, Alexandrine, 94
Jumilhac, de, Mme, 87

Kelly. *See* Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Catherine.
Kourakine, Alexander, 138, 173

Labédoyère, Charles Angélique Huchet, Count, 257
La Besnardier, 223
Laclos, de, Pierre Ambroise François Choderlos, 16
Lacour-Gayet, 218
Lafayette, de, Marie Joseph Paul Roch Yves Gilbert Motier, Marquis, 20, 34, 279
Lafitte, 279, 294
Laforest, 116
Lally-Tollendal, de, Trophine Gérard, 44
Lamartine, de, Alphonse, 42
Lamennais, de, 277
Lameth, de, Mme, 87
Lamy, Etienne, 84
Lanjuinais, Jean Denis, Count, 202
La Révellière-Lepaux, 53, 55, 77
La Rochefoucauld, de, Mme, 87
La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt family, 87
La Rothière, Battle of, 190
Las Cases, de, Emanuel Augustin, Marquis, 141, 181
La Tour du Pin, 84, 223
La Tour du Pin, de, Mme, 185
Lauderdale, James Maitland, Earl of, 125, 126
Lauzun, General, 19
Laval, de, Viscountess, 20, 35, 167-8
Lavalette, Marie Chamons, Count, 191, 257

Lebrun, Anne Charles, Prince of Plaisance, 44, 77, 115, 123, 144, 166
Legendre de Luçay, 107
Lenoir-Laroche, 189
Leopold of Saxe-Coberg Gotha, 296
Lepélletier-Saint-Farjean. *See* Witt, de, Mme.
Lessart, de, Valdec. *See* Valdec de Lessart.
Letourneur, Charles Louis François Honoré, 53
Leyen, 233
Lichenstein, 233
Lieven, Prince, 288
Lieven, Dorothea, Princess, 288, 289
Ligurian Republic. *See* Genoan Republic.
Liverpool, Lord, 240
Livingston, Robert R., 104
Lorraine, de, Charlotte, 20
Lombardy, 60, 67, 226
Louis, Baron, 143, 190-1, 198, 202, 256
Louis XI, King, 51
Louis XIV, King, 13, 147, 148, 170, 219, 230, 235
Louis XV, King, 17, 20, 24, 87
Louis XVI, King, 17, 20, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 44, 45, 84, 163, 188, 194, 202, 210, 254, 270
Louis XVIII, King, Louis Stanislas Xavier, Count of Provence, called the Pretender before the Restoration, 49, 84, 85, 109, 163, 178, 180, 188, 189, 190, 191, 198, 199, 200, 202, 203, 207, 208, 209, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 220, 222, 223, 225, 226, 227, 230, 232, 233, 234, 236, 237, 241, 243, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 268, 269, 270, 271, 275, 276, 293
Louisiana, 52
Louis-Philippe, King, Duke d'Orleans, 188, 189, 275, 280-1, 282, 284, 285, 286, 288, 291, 293, 294, 296, 298, 302, 310
Luçay, de, Legendre. *See* Legendre de Luçay.
Lucchesini, da, Girolamo, 100, 101, 105, 116, 125-6, 127, 128
Lucien. *See* Bonaparte, Lucien.
Luxemburg, 234, 235
Luynes, de, Duchess, 20, 112

Mack, Marshal, 117
Madame. *See* Bonaparte, Madame.
Maistre, de, Joseph, Count, 163
Malmesbury, 59
Malouet, 30
Malta, 65, 102, 124
Mannay, Bishop, 21
Manuel, 279
Marat, Jean Paul, 12
Marboeuf, Bishop, 26
Maret, Hugues Bernard, Duke de Bassano, 96, 106, 175, 178, 183
Maria-Theresa, Empress, 24, 130
Marie-Amelie, Queen, 281
Marie-Louise, Empress, 187, 188, 190, 194, 195, 196, 201, 202, 226, 237, 242, 243, 249
Marigny, de, Marquis, 20
Markof, de, Arcadi, Count, 101
Marmont, de, Auguste Frederic Louis Viesse, Duke of Raguse, 193, 196, 197, 198, 204, 207, 248
Marolles, Bishop, 36
Mathieu, Cardinal, 89
Marbreuil, de, Marie Armand Guerri, Marquis, 276-7
Maurepas, Jean Frederic, Count, 21
Maurras, Charles, 190
Maury, Cardinal, 85
Mazarin, Jules, Cardinal, 24
Ménéval, de, Claude François, Baron, 94, 110, 148
Mérimée, Prosper, 289
Merlin de Douai, Philip Antoine, Count, 59, 61
Metternich, von, Clemenz Wenzel, Prince, 83, 122, 141, 151, 152, 153, 156, 157, 158, 160, 162, 164, 169, 171, 173, 174, 179, 180, 181, 182, 187, 192, 220, 227, 228, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 243, 244, 259, 283, 285, 292, 294, 297
Meurthe, de, Boulay. *See* Boulay de Meurthe.
Mignet, François Auguste Marie, 281
Mirabeau, de, Honoré Gabriel Victor Riquette, Count, 23, 30, 31, 33, 39-41, 103, 191, 213
Miroudat du Bourg, Bishop, 36
Molé, Louis Mathieu, Count, 94, 106, 111, 165, 182, 268, 274, 285, 287, 292, 293, 308
Moncey, de, Marshal, 197
Monge, Gaspard, Count de Peluse, 61, 62
Mongelas, 229
Montereau, Battle of (1814), 186
Montesquiou, de, Abbé, 85, 191, 203
Montesson, de, Countess, 20
Montrand, de, Casimir, 249
Moravia, 119
Moreau, General, 110, 163
Morny, little. *See* Auguste.
Morris, Gouverneur, 20
Mortier, 193, 197
Moscow, Retreat from (1812), 177
Moskowa, Victory of. *See* Borodino, Battle of.
Murat, Joachim, King of Naples, 12, 17, 163, 179, 223, 226, 235, 237, 238, 243, 245

Naples, House of, 123
Naples, King of. *See* Murat and Joseph.
Naples, Kingdom of, 51, 123, 223, 226, 234, 237, 238, 242
Napoleon I, Emperor, 15, 51, 58, 60, 62, 63, 64, 68, 70, 71, 73, 77, 78, 81-3, 84, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 197, 198, 199, 201, 203, 204, 207, 208, 210, 211, 212, 216, 221, 222, 226, 227, 228, 232, 236, 237, 238, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 254, 256, 258, 261, 269, 272, 273, 274, 277, 293, 303
Napoleon II, King of Rome, 187, 188, 194, 196, 201, 202, 207, 226, 237, 242, 243, 249
Napoleon III, 228
Narbonne, de, Louis, Count, 19, 41, 42, 43, 44
National Institute, 49-50, 53, 67, 303-4
Nations, Battle of (October 16-19, 1813), 182
Necker, Jacques, 31
Nemours, de, Louis Charles Philip, Duke, 294, 296
Nesselrode, von, Charles Robert, Count, 173, 174, 175, 192, 193, 197, 198, 231
Netherlands, 100. *See also* Holland.
Netherlands, King of, 242, 290, 291, 292, 293, 295, 297, 298
Neufchâteau, François de. *See* François de Neufchâteau.
Ney, Michel, Marshal, 207, 257
Nicholas I, Tsar, 285, 286, 288, 296
Noailles, de, Alexis, 223
Nompère de Champagny, Jean Baptiste, 82, 150, 152, 169, 172, 175, 179
Norway, 228
Noyon, Bishop of, 27

Odilon Barrot, Camille Hyacinthe, 279
Orange, House of, 290, 292, 295
Orange-Nassau, Prince of, 106
Orléans, d', Duke. *See* Egalité, Philip.

Orléans, d', Duke. *See* Louis-Philippe, King.
Orlof, Alexis, Count, 197, 198
Otrante, d', Duke. *See* Fouché, Joseph.
Otto, 98
Ottoman Empire, 50, 64, 80, 117, 138
Oubril, Baron, 125
Oubril's "treaty," 125, 126
Oudinot, Nicholas Charles, General, 171
Ouvrard, Gabriel Julien, 71, 78

Palmerston, Henry John, Viscount, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298
Parma, 226, 237, 242, 243
Parma, Duke of, also Prince of. *See* Cambacérès.
Parthenopean Republic, 67
Pasquier, Etienne Denis, 148, 183, 194, 195, 196, 197, 231, 256, 262, 268, 269, 270
Paul I, Tsar, 59-60
Perier, Casimir, 296, 298
Périgord, de, Adelbert, Count, 12, 216, 282
Périgord, de, Countess. *See* Courlande, de, Dorothy
Périgord, de, Edmond. *See* Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Edmond.
Périgord, de, Pauline, later Countess de Castellane, 268, 304-5, 306, 308
Pétion de Villeneuve, 43
Philaletheans, 22
Philip V, King of Spain, 147
Pichegru, Charles, General, 51, 111
Piedmont, 99, 100, 118, 141, 226, 228
Piedmont, King of, 67
Pitt, William, 42, 44, 124, 242
Pius VI, Pope, 19, 24, 37, 67
Pius VII, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 305, 307, 309
Plaisance, Prince of. *See* Lebrun.
Poland, 24, 51, 52, 53, 129-31, 132, 134, 137, 138, 142, 154, 174, 175, 223, 224, 225, 227, 228, 236, 242, 287, 295, 296
Polignac, de, Auguste Jules Armand Marie, Prince, 276, 281, 283, 284, 285
Pompadour, de, Marquise, 20
Ponte Corvo, Prince of. *See* Bernadotte.
Portugal, 233, 299
Posnania, 130
Pozzo di Borgo, 231, 254, 255
Pradt, de, Dominique Dufour, Abbé, 190, 191, 198, 202, 268
Pressburg, Peace of (1805), 122, 135, 142, 151
Pretender, The, 49, 70, 84, 85. *See also* Louis XVIII.
Provence, de, Count. *See* Louis XVIII.
Prussia, 24, 25, 79, 80, 81, 100, 105, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 137, 138, 150, 182, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 231, 232, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 290, 291, 292, 294, 295, 296, 297
Prussia, King of. *See* Frederick William III.

Quelen, de, Hyacinthe Louis, Archbishop, 301, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310

Raguse, Duke of. *See* Marmont.
Ratisbonne, 119
Recess of the German Empire. *See* German Empire, Recess of.
Reign of Terror, 45, 68
Reinhard, Karl Friedrich, Count, 70, 72, 303
Rémusat, de, Auguste, Count, 194, 195, 196, 197
Rémusat, de, Claire, Countess, 95, 105, 114, 142, 144, 147, 148, 162, 194, 195, 196
Réné, 255
Repnine, Nicolas, General, 238
Republic, The, 46, 49, 53, 57, 58, 59, 60, 70, 71, 84, 210, 228, 281
Restoration, The, 15, 57, 190, 220, 256
Retz, de, Jean François Paul de Gondi, Cardinal, 15
Reubell, Jean Baptiste, 53, 55, 77
Re-united Friends, 22
Revolution, The, 12, 23, 29, 31, 32, 34, 39, 41, 43, 45, 46, 49, 51, 73, 78, 80, 84, 86, 109, 114, 163, 177, 188, 189, 199, 202, 207, 210, 212, 213, 214, 215, 217, 219, 227, 229, 247, 248, 257, 273, 276
Rhine, Confederation of, 126, 214
Rhineland, 51, 60, 228, 239-41, 242
Richelieu, de, Armand Emanuel du Plessis, Duke, 268, 269, 270, 271, 273
Richelieu, Armand Jean du Plessis, Cardinal, 24, 25, 27, 50
Robespierre, de, Maximilien Marie Isidore, 12, 45, 213
Roederer, Pierre Louis, Count, 148, 165, 170
Roger-Ducos, 71-2, 202
Rohan, de, Louise, Countess de Brionne, 19-20
Rohan-Chabot. *See* La Rochefoucauld, de, Mme.
Roman Republic, 67
Romanov family, 130, 224
Rombeck, von, Countess, 120, 126
Rome, King of. *See* Napoleon II.
Rosati, Academy of, 12
Roumiantsof, 154
Rovigo, Duke of. *See* Savary.
Royer-Collard, Pierre Paul, 275, 276, 298, 308
Russia, 25, 53, 80, 81, 100, 116, 117, 120, 121, 122, 125, 128, 130, 132, 133, 134, 154, 155, 157, 171, 173, 174, 175, 179, 182, 223, 224, 225, 227, 231, 233, 235, 239, 241, 283, 284, 290, 292, 298

Sade, de, Donatien Alphonse, Marquis, 16
Sagan, de, Prince, 267
Sandoz Rollin, 61, 64
Saint-Aulaire, Louis, Marquis, 308
Saint-Cyr, Gouvion. *See* Gouvion Saint-Cyr.
Saint-Leon, Dufresne, 248, 249
Saint-Simon, 251
San Carlos, Josef, Duke, 167, 229
Sardinia, 220, 226, 243
Sardinia, King of, 79, 99, 100, 220, 222, 226, 236
Savary, Anne Marie Réné, Duke of Rovigo, 141, 146, 148, 183, 190, 191, 195-6, 269
Savoy, 51, 225, 237, 261
Saxony, 128, 223, 224, 225, 227, 234, 235, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242
Saxony, King of. *See* Frederick Augustus II.
Scandinavian States, 52. *See also* Sweden and Norway.
Schwarzenberg, von, Karl Philip, Prince, 157, 173, 180, 186, 187, 192, 193, 197
Sebastiani, Horace François, General, 275, 282, 287, 293
Ségurs family, 87
Sémallé, de, Count, 203
Senegal, 52
Seven Years' War (1756–63), 24
Sheridan, Richard Brindsley Butler, 43
Sicilies, King of the Two, 67, 268
Sicily, 124
Sièyes, Emmanuel Joseph, Count, Abbé, 30, 70, 71-2, 84, 178, 202
Silesia, 130, 132
Somo Sierra, Battle of, 161
Sorel, Albert, 153, 225
Soult, Nicolas Jean de Dieu, Duke of Dalmatia, 275
Souza, de, Countess. *See* Flauhaut, de, Adelaide.
Spain, 24, 53, 146, 149, 150, 152, 161, 166, 167, 183, 229, 232, 260, 274, 279, 299
Spinra, 90

Staël, de, Mme, Germaine Necker de Staël-Holstein, 44, 45, 46, 48, 63, 68, 106, 147, 236, 309
Stuart, Charles, 269
Swabia, 118
Sweden, 137, 174, 228, 233
Switzerland, 67, 99, 100, 237, 244

Talleyrand, de, Baron, 308
Talleyrand, de, Charlotte, 308
Talleyrand, de, Marquis. *See* Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Edmond.
Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Alexandre Angélique, Cardinal, 14, 37, 178, 180, 190, 217, 272, 305
Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Alexandrine, Countess, 13, 27, 37-8
Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Archambaud, 14, 96
Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Boson, 14, 96
Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Catherine Noël Worlee Grand, Princess de Bénévent, 67, 69, 89, 94-7, 106, 115, 148, 149, 184, 185, 300-1, 305
Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Edmond, Duke de Dino, 161, 267
Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Charles-Daniel, Count, 13, 26
Talleyrand-Périgord, de, Daniel-Marc-Anne, 13
Terror, Reign of. *See* Reign of Terror.
Thiers, Louis Adolphe, 279, 281, 282, 300, 302, 303, 304
Thiry, Jean, 243
Thurn-Taxis, de, Princess, 154
Thureau Dangin, 293
Tilsit, Peace of (1807), 121, 134, 136, 137-8, 142
Tolstoy, 152
Trafalgar, Battle of (1805), 119
Treaty of Campo-Formio (1797), 58, 60, 66
Treaty of January 3, 1815, 241-2
Treaty of Chaumont (1814), 245
Treaty of Fountainbleau (1814), 261
Treaty of Lunéville, (1801), 98, 104
Treaty of Twenty-Four Articles (October 15, 1831), 297, 298
Treaty of Paris (May 30, 1814), 145, 215 et seq, 218, 219, 224, 225, 232, 233, 239, 243
Treaty of Vienna (March 5, 1815), 81, 245
Turgot, Baron, 21
Turkey, 174. *See also* Ottoman Empire.
Tuscany, Grand Duke of, 78
Tyrol, 118

United States. *See* America.
Ulm, Battle of, 117

Vaisuel, de, Mme, 87
Valdec de Lessart, Antoine de, 41, 42, 43
Valençay, de, Duke. *See* Sagan, de, Prince.
Valois, The, 50, 78
Vauchamp, Battle of (1815), 186
Vaudemont, de, Princess, 20, 162
Venice, 60, 100, 118, 121, 226
Vergennes, Charles, 50, 51, 137, 194
Vergennes, Mme, 87
Vicence, de, Duke. *See* Caulaincourt.
Vienna, Congress of, 81, 100, 209, 213, 214, 221, 222 et seq, 230-46, 248, 249, 259, 294, 295
Vigée-Lebrun, Marie Louise, 67, 301
Villele, Joseph, Count, 147, 273, 274, 275
Vincent, de, Baron, 123, 125, 132-4, 135, 136, 142, 153, 154, 155
Vitrolles, de, Eugene, 40, 102, 157, 192, 204, 208, 262

Wagram, Prince of. *See* Berthier.
Waleska, Maria, Countess, 131
Wallachia, 118, 137
Waterloo, Battle of (June 18, 1815), 249, 258, 284
Wellington, Arthur Wellesley, Duke, 249, 251, 254, 258, 259, 270, 284, 285, 286, 288, 291, 292, 293, 294
Wellington, Wellesley, the younger, 286
William IV, King of England, 288, 289
Withworth, 102
Witt, de, Mme, 87
Württemberg, 116, 141

Ximenes, Cardinal, 15

Yarmouth, 125

DATE DUE

APR 6

MAR 14

APR 13

MAR 17

APR 18

DEC 5

DEC. 16 1992

JAN 13 1993

DISCARD

GREENVILLE COLLEGE LIBRARY
920T14M C001
MADELIN, LOUIS, 1871-1956.
TALLEYRAND LONDON STX
3 4511 00090 6632

920
T14m
25178

AUTHOR Madelin, Louis

TITLE Talleyrand.

DATE DUE	BORROWER'S NAME
APR 6	Layla Church
MAR 14	Richard Le
APR 13	Rose Ma
MAR 17	Joyce Be
APR 18	Jan
DEC 5	V.C.D.
DEC. 16 1992	
JAN 13 1993	

25178
920
T14m